

Stroke Education Series

Module 1: Stroke prevention and warning signs

This fact sheet discusses the different types of stroke, as well as how to prevent a stroke and recognize warning signs

What is a stroke?



A stroke results from sudden damage to the brain from lack of blood flow (ischemic stroke) or rupture of blood vessels (hemorrhagic stroke). Problems caused by a stroke will depend on how much and what part of the brain was affected during the stroke.

Symptoms of a stroke may include:

- Loss of strength and sensation on one side of your body
- Loss of consciousness, confusion
- Sudden and severe headache
- Trouble speaking
- Sudden visual problems or dizziness

Remember FAST

If you think someone may be having a stroke, ask them to:

- make a smile (FACE),
- lift both ARMS
- and ask them to say a sentence (SPEECH).

If they have problems, call 911 (TIME)

Risk factors for stroke

Some risk factors (such as age, race, gender and family history) are non-modifiable, meaning you cannot change.

Many however, you can do something about! These include

1. High Blood Pressure- Can increase stroke risk by 4-6 X. Your blood pressure should be <130/80.
2. Diabetes- your blood sugar should be between 4-8 ideally
3. High Cholesterol- your total cholesterol should be <4, and your “bad cholesterol” (LDL) should be <2
4. Atrial fibrillation- This may increase your stroke risk by 6X. If you have this abnormal type of heart beat, you should be on a blood thinner such as coumadin or dabigatran.
5. Smoking – increases stroke risk by 2 X
6. Alcohol- immediately following stroke, alcohol should be avoided to promote best brain recovery.



Medications that you may be on to prevent at stroke

If you had an ischemic (NON bleeding type) stroke, you should be on a blood thinner such as aspirin, clopidigrel (TM Plavix), or ASA-dipyridamole (TM Aggrenox). You may instead be taking warfarin (TM coumadin) and dabigatran (TM Pradax) if you have atrial fibrillation. You may also be on cholesterol medication, blood pressure medication, and/or diabetes medication.

Talk to your team if you are interested in medications to help with successful smoking cessation.

Things you can do to prevent another stroke

Exercise regularly

Eat well

Don't smoke

Limit alcohol intake

Monitor for depression/ life stressors

**For more information, contact
Your Bridgepoint Healthcare Team
or**

The Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada
www.heartandstroke.com

Many stroke risk factors such as blood pressure, atrial fibrillation, smoking, exercise and your diet can be controlled to significantly lower your risk of having another stroke

Bridgepoint Active Healthcare provides care and services to adults living with Multiple complex health conditions. Active healthcare is what we do: we Manage, deliver, research and coordinate the highest quality care for adults Living with conditions like diabetes, stroke, heart disease, mental illness, cancer, And respiratory, neurological and degenerative diseases. We work with patients, And with health and community care providers to create a collaborative plan that Encompasses the individual's overall medical and psychosocial well-being. Affiliated with the University of Toronto, Bridgepoint includes the Bridgepoint Hospital, Bridgepoint Family Health Team, Bridgepoint Collaboratory for Research and Innovation and Bridgepoint Foundation.

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