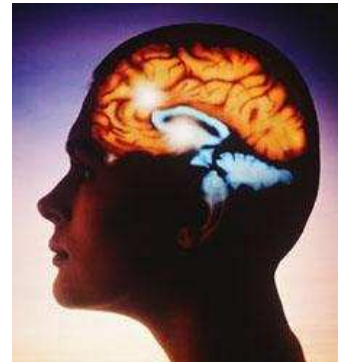


# Stroke Awareness

Blood vessels carrying blood to the brain from the heart are called arteries. There are seven arteries that carry blood to specific parts of the brain. The brain needs a constant supply of blood to function. A stroke happens when one of these arteries to the brain is either blocked or bursts. Consequently, part of the brain does not get the needed blood and it begins to die.



Here are some facts regarding strokes and how you can reduce your risk of having one.

❖ In the United States, stroke is the leading cause of death, killing over 133,000 people each year. It is also the leading cause of serious, long-term adult disability.

❖ Roughly 795,000 strokes will occur this year, happening every 40 seconds, and taking a life approximately every four minutes.



❖ Every minute during a stroke, two million brain cells die. This increases the risk of permanent brain damage, disability, and death.

❖ Know your blood pressure (hypertension.) If left untreated, this is a major risk factor for having a stroke.

❖ An abnormal heartbeat (Atrial Fibrillation) can increase stroke risk by 500%. It causes blood to pool in the heart, forming a clot. Your doctor can identify and treat you for this condition.





❖ Smoking doubles your risk for having a stroke. You will immediately begin lowering your risk by stopping today.

❖ High cholesterol levels can clog arteries and cause a stroke. If your total cholesterol levels are over 200, see a doctor.

❖ By controlling diabetes, you reduce your risk of having a stroke.

❖ Maintain a healthy weight and exercise regularly. Excess weight causes strain on your circulatory system.

❖ Act F.A.S.T at the first warning signs of stroke (See below.)  
Seek immediate medical treatment.



**F= FACE**      Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop?

**A=ARMS**      Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

**S=SPEECH**      Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence. Does their speech sound slurred or strange?

**T=TIME**      If you observe any of these signs (separately or together), call 9-1-1 immediately.

There are many risk factors that are beyond your control, including being over the age of 55, being male, being African-American, having diabetes, or having a family history of stroke. It is very important that you gain knowledge of lifestyle and medical changes that can help prevent a stroke.

