

Controlling your risk: A “Stroke” is a “Brain Attack”

Stroke (or CVA) is permanent brain damage due to blockage of or bleeding from an artery in the brain. is a stroke. You are at increased risk of having a stroke if you have...

- atrial fibrillation (A-fib)
- uncontrolled diabetes
- uncontrolled high blood pressure
- drink alcohol to excess, or binge drink
- had a mini-stroke (transient ischemic attack, TIA)

To decrease your risk, control your...

- clot-prevention medication if you have atrial fib.
- blood pressure to keep it below 120/80.
- blood glucose to keep your A1C below 7.
- drinking of alcohol: 1 or fewer servings daily if you are a woman, 2 or fewer servings daily if you are a man.

Hemorrhagic stroke is caused by bleeding into brain tissue. An artery breaks as a result of a weakness in the artery wall (aneurysm) or uncontrolled high blood pressure. These strokes are called

- cerebral hemorrhage
- subarachnoid hemorrhage

A mini-stroke (transient ischemic attack – TIA) is a temporary blockage of blood in an artery in your brain. Having a TIA increases your risk of having a stroke within the next year.

Atherosclerotic (vascular) **stroke** causes permanent damage. It begins with a buildup of plaque (calcium, cholesterol, and dead cells) on the walls of arteries. The plaque may break and cause a blood clot to form inside an artery. The clot may block the artery where it formed, this is a thrombosis. The clot may break off and travel before blocking another artery, this is an embolism.

Names for these strokes are

- cerebral embolism
- cerebral thrombosis
- cerebrovascular accident – CVA – “brain attack”

Early symptoms of stroke and TIA may include one or more of these: sudden, severe headache; trouble seeing, speaking, understanding, smiling, grasping, writing, walking or balancing.

A stroke is a “brain attack”. Prompt medical attention can help reduce brain damage and prevent death. Get help right away. Call 911.