

Strokes

Definition:

A stroke is the sudden blockage or rupture of a blood vessel in the brain which stops the blood supply to the brain.

Brain cells begin to die within four minutes of the beginning of a stroke.

When dealing with a stroke, you should act quickly because the earlier the person receives treatment, the better.

Signs & Symptoms:

- Facial weakness; drooping eyes and mouth
- Weakness in one arm
- Slurred speech
- Dizziness
- Blurred vision

Treatment for a stroke:

- Current treatment for acute stroke must be given by a doctor and within a short time.
- It is essential for the person having a stroke to get the emergency room as quickly as possible to get the most benefit from any treatment.
- If you think you are having a stroke or someone beside you is having a stroke, go to the nearest emergency room for medical care and treatment or call the ambulance immediately.
- Do not wait until the symptoms disappear.
- Do not take aspirin because you don't know the type of the stroke; this will be given later if needed.
- Use the FAST (Face-Arm-Speech-Test) guide if you suspect a person is having a stroke:

F – Facial weakness: the person is unable to smile and their eyes and/or mouth are droopy.

A – Arm weakness: the person is only able to elevate one arm.

S – Speech problems: the person is unable to speak clearly.

T – Time to call 140 for ambulance if you suspect the person has had a stroke.