

LEARN ABOUT

STROKE



HEALTH
Department

This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider.

What Is a Stroke?

A stroke happens when blood can't get to a part of the brain. This stops the brain from getting the oxygen it needs. If a stroke isn't treated quickly, it can cause serious damage to the brain.

There are two main types of strokes:

- **Ischemic stroke** – This happens when a blood clot blocks a blood vessel in the brain. It's the most common type
- **Hemorrhagic stroke** – This happens when a blood vessel in the brain breaks and bleeds

There is also something called a mini-stroke, or TIA (transient ischemic attack). This is when blood flow to the brain is blocked for a short time. It's not as serious as a major stroke, but it is still a warning sign that a bigger stroke could happen soon.

What Causes a Stroke?

Several things can raise your risk for stroke, including:

- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Diabetes
- Smoking
- Not being active or getting enough exercise
- Being overweight

Strokes can also be hereditary. They are more common in older adults, but young people can have strokes too.

Detroit offers several stroke support groups. The Spice of Life Stroke Club meets monthly at the Rehabilitation Institute of Michigan. Henry Ford's Survivorship Group supports both survivors and caregivers. Cane and Able is another local group in Detroit, and Stroke Onward provides emotional support and healing resources for life after a stroke.

Know the Signs – F.A.S.T.

- **F** = Face drooping (Is one side of the face hanging?)
- **A** = Arm weakness (Can they lift both arms?)
- **S** = Speech trouble (Slurring words or hard to understand?)
- **T** = Time to call 911 right away!