

Patient Information about Stroke

<http://www.neurologychannel.com/patient-information-stroke/index.shtml>

A stroke, brain stroke, or brain attack, occurs when blood flow in a region of the brain is obstructed by a blockage within a blood vessel (ischemic stroke) or by a ruptured blood vessel (hemorrhagic stroke). Strokes can be life threatening and require **immediate medical attention**.

Stroke warning signs may come on suddenly or come and go over time. Stroke symptoms include numbness or weakness on one side of the body, confusion, vision problems, dizziness, loss of balance, difficulty walking, severe headache, and difficulty speaking or understanding speech. Serious damage to brain tissue can occur even if stroke symptoms seem mild. Prompt treatment can reduce the risk for severe complications and improve stroke recovery.

Here are some questions for stroke victims and their families and caregivers to ask about stroke. **Print this page**, check off the questions you would like answered, and take it with you to the doctor appointment. The more knowledge you have about stroke, the easier it is to make important medical decisions.

Questions to Ask Your Doctor about Stroke Diagnosis

- Why do you suspect that I or my family member may have had a stroke? What kind of stroke do you suspect occurred?
- What is a mini stroke?
- What kinds of examinations and diagnostic tests will be performed? Will stroke diagnosis involve physical examinations, imaging tests, and/or laboratory tests?
- What do these tests involve?
- What are the risks, benefits, and possible complications associated with these tests?
- What is the severity of my or my family member's condition?
- Will special care at home be required as a result of stroke?
- How will stroke affect my or my family member's daily life?
- How likely is another stroke?
- How can stroke risk be reduced?
- If another stroke occurs, will it likely be more severe than the first?

Questions to Ask Your Doctor about Stroke Treatment

- What will stroke treatment involve?
- What are the benefits, risks, and possible complications of the recommended stroke treatment?
- Will stroke rehabilitation therapy be necessary? If so, will rehabilitation involve physical therapy, speech therapy, and/or occupational therapy?
- How will these rehabilitation services be scheduled?
Name of practice/therapist:
Telephone number to call:
- How long will the stroke recovery process take?
- Do you expect that I or my family member will be able to return to my normal activities after rehabilitation?
- Will medication(s) to treat any damage done by the stroke be necessary?
- Will medication(s) to prevent another stroke from occurring be necessary?
- What are the risks, benefits, and side effects associated with these medication(s)?
- What steps should be taken if serious drug side effects develop?
Telephone Number to call:
- Might changes in diet and/or exercise program aid in healing and help prevent another stroke? If so, what changes do you recommend?
- Might these changes in diet and exercise help me or my family member avoid having to take certain medications? Why or why not?
- Can you recommend sources for more information on diet and stroke prevention?

Questions to Ask Your Doctor about Stroke Surgery

- What does surgery to treat stroke involve?

- What are the risks, benefits, and possible complications involved with this surgery?
- Will hospitalization be necessary following stroke surgery? If so, for how long?
- Will rehabilitation therapy be needed after the surgery?
- If so, how will these rehabilitation services be scheduled?
Name of practice/therapist:
Telephone number to call:
- What kind of help at home will be necessary after the surgery?
- Do you expect I or my family member will be able to return to normal activities after the surgery and rehabilitation?
- How and when will we know if the stroke surgery is successful? Are there any warning signs to watch for after the procedure?
- Will medication(s) be necessary after the surgery? If so, what medication(s) will be prescribed?
- How long will this medication be necessary?
- What steps should be taken if serious side effects or complications develop?
Telephone number to call:
- Can you recommend a local or online support group for stroke patients and their families and caregivers?
- Can you recommend any additional resources for stroke information?
- Do you recommend participation in a clinical trial for stroke patients? Why or why not?

Notes/Additional Information