



Fact Sheet

Quick Facts on Stroke

Each year, an estimated 700,000 Americans experience a stroke. About 500,000 of these are first attacks, and 200,000 are recurrent attacks. An estimated 150,000 of these events result in death making stroke the nation's third leading cause of death. This means, on average, a stroke occurs every 45 seconds; about every 3 minutes someone dies from a stroke.¹

- A stroke is a sudden loss of brain function, commonly referred to as a “brain attack.”
- There are two types of stroke: Ischemic and Hemorrhagic.
- Ischemic stroke accounts for 83 percent of all stroke cases.³
- Ischemic strokes are caused by blockages in the arteries that supply blood to the brain.³
- Carotid Artery Disease, a leading cause of ischemic stroke, occurs when the major arteries in the neck that carry blood from the heart to the brain, become narrowed or blocked. This causes insufficient blood supply to the brain resulting in a stroke.²
- There are three scenarios in which carotid artery disease can cause an ischemic stroke:
 - The carotid artery or one of its branches becomes narrowed by plaque that blood flow to the brain is limited.
 - A blood clot from another area of the vascular system wedges in a carotid artery narrowed by disease. Or, a smaller vessel in the intracranial branch of the carotid can become clogged. This would then obstruct blood flow to the brain.
 - A piece of plaque separates from the wall of the carotid artery and blocks one of the arteries in the brain.
- Hemorrhagic stroke accounts for 17 percent of stroke cases.³
- Hemorrhagic strokes are caused by bleeding in or around the brain.³
- A Transient Ischemic Attacks (TIA) is a "warning stroke" or "mini-stroke" that produces stroke-like symptoms, but no lasting damage.³

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- Symptoms of TIA include: numbness or weakness on one side of the body, sudden confusion, trouble speaking and understanding, vision problems, dizziness and headaches.³
- The effects of stroke depend on several factors including the location of the obstruction and how much brain tissue is affected. If a stroke occurs in the brain's right side, the left side of the body will be affected, causing memory loss, vision problems, paralysis on the left side of the body and quick, inquisitive behavioral style. If the stroke occurs in the left side of the brain, the right side of the body will be affected, causing speech problems, paralysis on the right side of the body, slow behavioral style and memory loss.³

References

¹American Heart Association, *Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics - 2006 Update*. Dallas, TX: American Heart Association, 2006.

²Carotid Artery Disease, Stroke, Transient Ischemic Attacks (TIAs). *Society for Vascular Surgery*. Retrieved from www.vascularweb.org 12/08/06.

³What are the Types of Stroke? *American Stroke Association*. Retrieved from www.strokeassociation.org. 12/08/06.