

What is FAST?

FAST is a simple way to remember the main symptoms of stroke. Recognizing these symptoms helps you know when to call for medical help.

FAST stands for:

- **F**ace drooping.
- **A**rm weakness.
- **S**peech difficulty.
- **T**ime to call 911.

What happens when you have a stroke?

A stroke occurs when a blood vessel to the brain bursts or is blocked by a blood clot. Within minutes, the nerve cells in that part of the brain die. As a result, the part of the body controlled by those cells cannot work properly.

The effects of a stroke may range from mild to severe. They may get better, or they may last the rest of your life. A stroke can affect vision, speech, behavior, thought processes, and your ability to move.

It can cause symptoms that may include:

- Sudden numbness, tingling, weakness, or loss of movement in your face, arm, or leg, especially on only one side of your body.
- Sudden vision changes.
- Sudden trouble speaking.
- Sudden confusion or trouble understanding simple statements.
- Sudden problems with walking or balance.
- A sudden, severe headache that is different from past headaches.

Why is it important to get help FAST?

Quick treatment may save your life, and it may reduce the damage in your brain so that you have fewer problems after the stroke.

When you know the FAST symptoms, you will know when it's important to call for medical help.

For 24/7 nurse advice and general health information call Health Link at 811.

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