

Stroke Assessment and Prevention

Basic facts about stroke

- Stroke is the second-leading cause of death world-wide and the number one cause of disability.
- Stroke is damage to the brain when blood can't get to the brain. This happens when a blood vessel bursts or is blocked.
- Strokes can happen at any age, for any race or gender.
- 80% of strokes are preventable with a healthy lifestyle.

Symptoms of stroke

The acronym — **BE FAST** — can help you remember the symptoms of stroke and what to do:

- Balance – loss of balance or trouble walking.
- Eyes – difficulty seeing out of one or both eyes.
- Face – uneven smile or one side of the face droops.
- Arms – one arm is weak or drifts down.
- Speech – slurred or hard to understand.
- Time to call 9-1-1.

What puts you at risk for a stroke?

Do you have or have you had any of the following? (Check all that apply.)

- ☐ **Previous stroke or transient ischemic attack (TIA)?**
- ☐ **High blood pressure** (greater than 120/80)?
Today's blood pressure: _____
Your blood pressure medications: _____
- ☐ **Diabetes?**
A1C (blood sugar level): _____
(Goal is to maintain A1C less than 7.)
Your diabetic medications: _____
- ☐ **Smoke or use tobacco?**
- ☐ **High cholesterol** (greater than 200 mg/dL)?
(Goal is to maintain LDL less than 70 long term)
Your cholesterol medications: _____
- ☐ **High body mass index (BMI)**, a measure of your weight compared to your height.
BMI 25 or higher? ☐ Yes ☐ No

- ☐ **Atrial fibrillation/atrial flutter** (irregular, often rapid heartbeat)?
Your anticoagulant (blood-thinning) medication: _____
- ☐ **Carotid artery stenosis** (plaque buildup inside neck artery)?
- ☐ **Brain artery stenosis** (plaque buildup inside artery in brain)?
- ☐ **Sleep apnea** (disorder that causes snoring and irregular breathing during sleep)?
Do you snore loudly? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Is your BMI higher than 35? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Do you often feel tired, lack of energy or sleepy during the day? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Has anyone observed your breathing stop while you sleep? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Have you been diagnosed with sleep apnea? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Make a plan to lower your risk

Use this handout to talk with your primary care provider about ways to reduce your risk of a stroke.

[Peacehealth.org/stroke](https://peacehealth.org/stroke)