

Tip Sheet #1



The Warning Signs of Another Stroke

What are the warning signs of another stroke?

Warning signs could mean the stroke survivor is having another stroke.
These warning signs are an emergency! Call 911!

- Sudden **numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg**, especially on one side of the body
- Sudden **confusion, trouble speaking or understanding**
- Sudden trouble **seeing in one or both eyes**
- Sudden trouble **walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination**
- Sudden, **severe headache** with no known cause

Another way to recognize a stroke is BE FAST.

B- Balance – Loss of balance?

E- Eyes – Loss of vision in one or both eyes?

F- Facial drooping or numb? Ask the person to smile.

A- Arm weakness or numb? Ask the person to raise both arms.

S- Speech difficulty or slurred? Ask the person to say “The sky is blue.”

T- Time to call 911. Note the time when symptoms first noticed, and the time when they were “last seen well.”

An emergency medical doctor must treat a person as quickly as possible from the start of warning signs. Do not ignore these warning signs.

Sometimes a person may have a warning sign only for a few minutes and be back to normal again. This is called a TIA. **Warning signs that go away are still an emergency! Call 911!**

Having another stroke within 5 years is common. For ischemic stroke survivors who are between the ages of 40 to 69 years, 13% men and 22% women have another stroke within 5 years. For those who are age 70 or older, the percentages are even higher (23% men, 28% women). The risk for another hemorrhagic stroke is lower, but follow-up care for both types of stroke (ischemic and hemorrhagic) is very important.

Some stroke survivors already have problems with many of the things listed in the warning signs of stroke. Their doctor may already know about these problems. What problems does your stroke survivor have?

Check the problems that the doctor already knows about below:

- ☐ numbness or weakness of the face, arm, or leg
- ☐ confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- ☐ trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- ☐ trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- ☐ severe headache with no known cause

If they already have some of these problems, **be sure to call 911 if they suddenly seem worse or if they have new warning signs.**

- It is important to **write down the exact time** that warning signs first began, or when the stroke suddenly seemed worse. **Be sure to note exactly when the person was “last seen well.”** Doctors will ask for this information to see if they can give certain medications.
- **Stroke survivors who are treated quickly** by an emergency room doctor often have fewer disabilities and better recovery than those who are treated later. There are more treatment options available to stroke survivors who are treated quickly.
- Studies have shown that people who call 911 are more likely to get to the emergency room doctor quicker than those who are driven in by family or friends. You don’t want to be stuck in a waiting room.

How can I as a caregiver help with warning signs of another stroke?

- Talk with the stroke survivor about the warning signs of another stroke. Tell them to call 911 if they notice any. Note the time they were “last seen well.”
- Tell family and friends about the warning signs of another stroke. Tell them to call 911 if they notice any. Note the time they were “last seen well.”
- Put a list of the warning signs of another stroke on your refrigerator or by your telephone with instructions to call 911. Put a copy of the list in your purse or wallet so that you have them with you wherever you go.
- **Keep a list of all medications and medical conditions** that the stroke survivor has. The emergency doctor or admitting nurse may ask you for this information.

When do I need to call for help if I notice any warning signs of another stroke? Immediately! Call 911! The sooner the stroke survivor can make it to the emergency room doctor, the better chance they have for recovery. **Time lost is brain lost!**

Where can I find more information about the warning signs of another stroke?

- If you have any questions about the warning signs of stroke or for more information about stroke, you can call the American Stroke Association’s Toll-Free Warmline or visit their website.

American Stroke Association’s Toll-Free Warmline
1-888-4-STROKE or 1-888-478-7653

American Stroke Association’s Website
www.StrokeAssociation.org