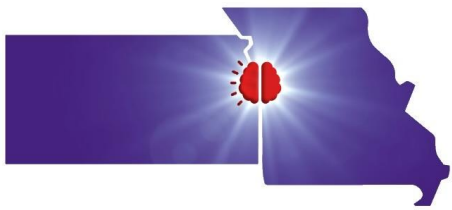


# Stroke Month Education Toolkit

*Brought to you by the  
Bi-State Stroke Consortium &  
Association of Stroke  
Coordinators*



ASSOCIATION  
*of*  
STROKE   
COORDINATORS

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# INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Stroke Education Toolkit is to have stroke education resources in one easy to find place for use during National Stroke Awareness Month (May) and throughout the year to educate patients, the public, and staff about stroke. Intended users are staff at healthcare facilities and services, emergency medical services, and community members. The emphasis is on acute stroke but some information about risk factors and prevention is included. It is not intended to include every stroke education resource available.

Additionally, we would like to thank the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association, the CDC Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention, Million Hearts, the National Stroke Association, the National Institutes of Health, and the Health Promotion and Communication Section of the Office of the Assistant Secretary at the Washington State Department of Health for the resources that are included in this toolkit.

This update is provided by the Bistate Stroke Consortium and the Association of Stroke Coordinators.

For information about the toolkit:

- Visit American Heart Association's Stroke Month Toolkit site:  
[www.Heart.org/StrokeMonth](http://www.Heart.org/StrokeMonth)
- Contact your local hospital and ask to speak to your Stroke Coordinator.
- Visit the Bistate Stroke Consortium website : [Bi-State Stroke Consortium | American Stroke Association](#)
- Visit the Association of Stroke Coordinators Facebook page:  
<https://www.facebook.com/associationofstrokecoordinators>
- Visit the Kansas Initiative for Stroke Survival website:  
[KISS – Kansas Initiative for Stroke Survival \(kissnetwork.us\)](http://KISS – Kansas Initiative for Stroke Survival (kissnetwork.us))

# KEY FACTS AND MESSAGES

- Stroke is a medical emergency and should be treated just as quickly as someone having a heart attack.
- Stroke is often called a “brain attack” because it affects the arteries leading to and within the brain. A stroke happens when an artery that carries oxygen and nutrients to the brain is either blocked by a clot or ruptures. When that happens, part of the brain cannot get the blood and oxygen it needs and starts to die.
- Ischemic stroke, about 87 percent of all strokes, is caused by a severe blockage of blood to part of the brain. Most commonly, blood flow through an artery is blocked by atherosclerosis (narrowed arteries).
- Hemorrhagic stroke occurs when arteries leak or rupture, causing bleeding into or around the brain.
- Every 40 seconds someone has a stroke.
- Stroke is a leading cause of serious long-term disability in adults.
- **Be a Stroke Hero:** Learn the signs and symptoms of stroke and call 9-1-1 immediately if you think you or someone you’re with is having a stroke.
- **B.E. F.A.S.T** for the most common signs and symptoms of stroke, and call 9-1-1 immediately if you or someone you’re with has signs of a stroke.

**B** **alance:** Is balance or coordination changed? Is walking or sitting upright difficult? Is the person dizzy?

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**E** **yes:** Is vision in 1 or both eyes difficult? Is there double vision or a blind spot in vision?

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**F** **ace:** Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop or is it numb?

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**A** **rms:** If the person raises both arms, does one arm drift downward or not move? If the person raises both legs, does one leg drift downward or not move? Any numbness?

---

**S** **peech:** Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence like “the sky is blue.” Is speech slurred or hard to understand? Are they unable to speak? Can they repeat the sentence correctly?

---

**T** **ime:** Time to call 911 if you see any one of these signs. Note the time symptoms started, or when the person was last known to be normal and tell the medics.

---

- If you see even one of these signs, call 9-1-1 immediately! Minutes matter!
  - Calling 911 at the first sign of stroke is critical. Emergency medical service responders are specially trained on stroke assessment, and they alert the hospital in advance so stroke patients get seen and treated faster. The faster stroke is treated, the more likely the patient will recover. Patients who are treated within 90 minutes of their first symptoms are almost three times more likely to recover with little or no disability.
- Time is brain – there is a short period of time after the symptoms start, when serious damage can be prevented. Rehabilitation after a stroke helps people overcome disabilities that result from damage to the brain.

- A stroke can happen to anyone, at any time and at any age. Learn to recognize a stroke, because in a stroke emergency, time lost is brain lost. For every minute you don't get help, more brain cells die.
- **80% of strokes are preventable.**
  - [High blood pressure](#) is the leading cause of stroke and the most important controllable risk factor for stroke.
  - You can [reduce your risk](#) of stroke by addressing these modifiable risk factors:
    - High blood pressure
    - Overweight
    - Cigarette smoking, vaping, e-cigarettes, and smokeless tobacco
    - High cholesterol
    - Diabetes
    - Physically inactive
    - Poor diet
- Many people die or are disabled from stroke because they do not get lifesaving treatment in time. The sooner you're treated, the better your chances of recovery and getting back to your normal activities. Calling 9-1-1 when you or someone else is experiencing stroke symptoms activates the stroke system. The system is designed to get you to the right place, in time for the right treatments.
- People who experience stroke benefit from rehabilitation services. Rehabilitation helps improve function and quality of life.

## **BRAIN HEALTH MESSAGES**

- Heart disease and high blood pressure can damage your brain's health.
- Get your blood pressure checked regularly. Work with your health care professional to control your blood pressure and protect your brain health.
- Keep your blood pressure under control for a healthier body and brain.
- Dementia and stroke are more likely to affect people with high blood pressure. Don't take unnecessary risks. Keep your blood pressure under control.
- Risk factors for heart disease – including diabetes – can negatively affect your brain health.
- Take care of both your heart and brain. Eat a healthy diet, control your weight, and exercise regularly.
- Exercise is not only good for your body, it's also good for your brain. Get regular exercise that makes your heartbeat faster, which increases blood flow to the brain and body.
- Physical activity can help build your brain health by lowering risk factors such as high blood pressure, diabetes and high cholesterol.
- It's never too late to start exercising for better health for your brain and body.

# STATISTICS

*Source: Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics- 2023 Update: A Report from the American Heart Association and the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention: Know your stroke risk.*

- Someone in the US has a stroke every 40 seconds on average.
- In 2020, stroke accounted for about 1 of every 21 deaths in the US.
- On average in 2020, someone died of stroke every 3 minutes 17 seconds.
- When considered separately from other cardiovascular diseases, stroke ranks No. 5 among all causes of death in the US, killing approximately 160,264 people a year.
- In 2020, the age-adjusted stroke death rate was 38.8 per 100,000, which is an 0.8% decrease from 2010 to 2020.
- Each year, about 795,000 people experience a new or recurrent stroke. Approximately 610,000 of these are first attacks, and 185,000 are recurrent attacks.
- Stroke is a leading cause of serious long-term disability in the US.
- Projections show that by 2030, an additional 3.4 million US adults aged 18 and older, representing 3.9% of the adult population, will have had a stroke, a 20.5% increase in prevalence from 2012. The highest increase (29%) is projected to be in white Hispanic males.
- Between 2015 and 2035, total direct medical stroke-related costs are projected to more than double, from \$36.7 billion to \$94.3 billion, with much of the projected increase in costs arising from those ≥80 years of age.
- In 2020, global prevalence of cerebrovascular disease was 89.13 million, whereas that of ischemic stroke was 68.16 million and that of hemorrhagic stroke was 18.8 million.
- [AHA National Heart and Stroke Statistics- 2023 Update](#)

# RESOURCES FOR PATIENTS & COMMUNITY EDUCATION

The following websites contain brochures, flyers, banners, tweets, infographics and other useful tools/resources

## AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION/AMERICAN STROKE ASSOCIATION:

- [www.Heart.org/StrokeMonth](http://www.Heart.org/StrokeMonth)
- [American Stroke Association Stroke Resource Library](#)
- [Life's Simple Seven](#)
- [Go Red for Women Campaign](#) with downloadable resources
- [Stroke Risk Factors](#)
- [Health Care Professional Resources on Secondary Stroke Prevention](#)
- [Stroke in Children](#) and [Pediatric Stroke Causes](#)
- [Stroke Rehab](#)

## CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL:

- [Stroke Communications Kit](#), including social media messages, shareable graphics, videos and additional resources
- [Stroke information for patients.](#)
- [American Heart Month Toolkits 2024](#)
- [CDC Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Programs](#)

## NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH:

- [Downloadable posters, toolkits](#) for order (including Spanish)
- [Know Stroke](#)

## MILLION HEARTS

- [Education Tools](#)
- [Learn and Prevent](#)

## REACT2STROKE CAMPAIGN:

- [Information for patients and caregivers](#), including 10 signs and symptoms of stroke, stroke facts, handouts, posters and brochures.
- [Information for healthcare professionals](#), including journal ads, billboards, magnets, wall posters, a news release template, and other resources. There are also public service announcements and videos available for download.



## **International Alliance for Pediatric Stroke**

- [Family Tool kit \(available in Spanish\)](#)

## **Nutrition Basics – American Stroke Association**

- [Eat Smart](#)
- [30 Tips to Help Your Family Eat Better](#)
- [Healthy Snacks](#)
- [Building Healthy Lunch Habits at Work](#)
- [Understanding Food Labels](#)

## **Stress Management – American Stroke Association**

- [Take Action To Control Stress](#)
- [Working Out to Relieve Stress](#)
- [Stress and Strain, Body and Brain Infographic](#)
- [Stressed Out? You're Not Alone Infographic](#)
- [3 Tips to Manage Stress](#)

## **Smoking & Vaping Resources**

- [Unlock a Life without Tobacco](#)
- [Quit Smoking, Vaping and Tobacco Use](#)
- [The Ugly Truth About Vaping](#)

## **Miscellaneous Stroke Resources**

- [Men and Stroke - CDC](#)
- [Women and Stroke - CDC](#)

# SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGING

## TWITTER

- If you think you're having a stroke, call 911 FIRST and FAST. [911 Warning Signs](#) #StrokeMonth
- May is American Stroke Month. Every 40 seconds someone has a stroke. Learn the warning signs and call 911. [Signs of Stroke](#) #StrokeMonth
- Saving a life starts with you. B.E. F.A.S.T. to identify the stroke warning signs. [Signs of Stroke](#) #StrokeMonth
- Before you get in your car or call a friend, call 911 FIRST and BE FAST if you suspect a stroke. [Signs of Stroke](#) #StrokeMonth
- Suspect a stroke? Don't wait! Fast care is a matter of life and death. Call 911 FIRST and BE FAST! [Signs of Stroke](#) #StrokeMonth
- Recognizing the signs and symptoms of a #stroke F.A.S.T. can help save lives. Here's how. <http://bit.ly/208s3wk> @CDCHeart\_Stroke
- Emergency services determine if it's a stroke, start immediate care, and get you to a medical facility. Call 911 FIRST and BE FAST! [Signs of Stroke](#) #StrokeMonth
- Up to 80% of strokes are preventable. Reduce #stroke deaths in your community with prevention and treatment strategies from @CDCgov @CDCHeart\_Stroke
- Every 40 seconds, someone in the U.S. has a #stroke. Be prepared: learn the signs & symptoms. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lpu-z4Bz168> #StrokeMonth
- #Stroke is preventable & treatable. This #StrokeMonth, take action to lower your risk for stroke. <https://www.cdc.gov/stroke/prevention.htm>
- #Stroke can happen to anyone at any time. Learn about your risk and ways to control it. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DbbQy8Cnifo> #StrokeMonth

## **FACEBOOK**

- Stroke is a leading cause of death and disability nationwide and around the world – but it doesn't have to be. Learn how you can treat and prevent stroke with tools from CDC [tag]. <http://bit.ly/2oJOWle>
- On average, one American dies from a stroke every 3 minutes 14 seconds. But there is good news: Up to 80% of strokes are preventable. Take action to lower your risk for stroke with these resources from CDC [tag]. #StrokeMonth [Stroke Facts | cdc.gov](#)
- Time lost is brain lost. Every minute counts when you or someone you know is having a stroke. B.E.F.A.S.T. and call 9-1-1 right away if you think someone might be having a stroke. #StrokeMonth <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/coverdell/bella.htm>
- Did you know that some stroke symptoms in women may be different from those in men? Here are 5 risk factors women should know to protect their brain health. <https://www.cdc.gov/stroke/women.htm>
- Not all women are equally affected by #stroke; African American women are 2x as likely to have a stroke as white women. Try these 4 lifestyle changes to lower your risk. <https://www.cdc.gov/stroke/women.htm>
- About 3 out of 10 Hispanic women have high blood pressure, a major stroke risk factor. Download this factsheet to learn how the ABCs of heart health can help lower your risk. [https://www.goredforwomen.org/-/media/phd-files-2/science-news/2/2021-heart-and-stroke-stat-update/2021\\_stat\\_update\\_factsheet\\_hispanic\\_latino\\_race\\_and\\_cvd.pdf](https://www.goredforwomen.org/-/media/phd-files-2/science-news/2/2021-heart-and-stroke-stat-update/2021_stat_update_factsheet_hispanic_latino_race_and_cvd.pdf)
- Can you spot the warning signs of a stroke? Take this quiz to find out. #StrokeMonth <https://www.stroke.org/en/about-stroke/stroke-risk-factors/stroke-quiz-english>
- See what stroke could look like on other people's faces. Play a game to identify stroke in others. <https://www.stroke.org/en/fast-experience/face-drooping>
- From the very first symptoms of stroke to recovery at home, here's how the CDC [tag] Coverdell Program connects health care professionals across the system of care to save lives and improve care. [https://youtu.be/i9Jb\\_BKzkxA](https://youtu.be/i9Jb_BKzkxA)
- How well can you detect the early warning signs of a stroke? Take the Face Quiz <https://www.stroke.org/en/fast-experience/face-drooping>
- After decades of declining rates of stroke deaths, progress in preventing stroke deaths in the U.S. has slowed. The good news? YOU have the power to make a difference. Explore stroke data and prevention strategies for health systems, health professionals, and state health departments. Via CDC – “[Start Small. Live Big](#)” and “[Live to the Beat](#)”

# SHAREABLE GRAPHICS & ANIMATIONS

The following animations are provided by [Million Hearts](https://www.millionhearts.org/). Feel free to use them in your social media messages and check out their library of [shareable graphics](https://www.millionhearts.org/shareable-graphics/).



“What happens in the ambulance during a stroke?” Animation

<https://www.facebook.com/millionhearts/videos/1541220415944210/>



“A Stroke Can Happen at Any Age” Animation

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1526071464125772>



“Preventing Stroke Deaths” Animation

<https://www.facebook.com/millionhearts/videos/1500023703397215/>



“Don’t Delay Going to the Hospital” Graphic

<https://www.cdc.gov/stroke/images/FB-Consum-Social-Card-NSAM-2021.jpg>



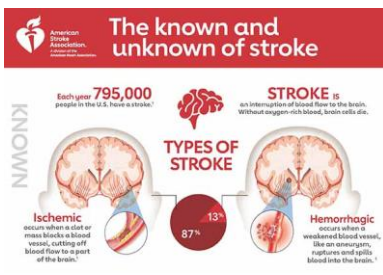
“Every 40 Seconds Someone in the US has a Stroke” Graphic

<https://www.cdc.gov/stroke/images/Stroke-Infocard1.jpg>



“8 Steps to Prevent Heart Disease and Stroke” Infographic

[https://www.heart.org/-/media/Healthy-Living-Files/Infographics/Prevention\\_In\\_fographic.pdf](https://www.heart.org/-/media/Healthy-Living-Files/Infographics/Prevention_In_fographic.pdf)



“The Known & Unknown of Stroke” Infographic

<https://www.stroke.org/en/professionals/stroke-resource-library/post-stroke-care/the-known-and-unknown-of-stroke-infographic>

# VIDEOS

## **GENERAL STROKE EDUCATION**

- Pediatric Stroke Warriors: Stroke Recognition in Children of All Ages  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gcfKq9AqTmA>
- CDC Preventing Stroke Deaths: Vital Signs/September 2017  
<https://youtu.be/HbmZBcf9k6s>
- Hoppy the Frog Teaches Kids Signs of a Stroke  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zRt6Us68ld4>
- CDC: Recognize the Signs and Symptoms of Stroke  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mkpbbWzvYmw>
- Health Sketch: What is a Stroke? Animated Explanation Video  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rylGnzodxDs>
- Stanford Stroke Awareness: BE FAST  
[Stanford Stroke Awareness Month: BE FAST - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Stanford+Stroke+Awareness+Month:+BE+FAST)
- American Heart Association: Treat Stroke F.A.S.T.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q5XHH1XfAbM>
- American Heart Association: Stroke Simulation: Know the signs. Call 911 quickly.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yt1Mv-UFLNk>
- American Heart Association: F.A.S.T. Song  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YUN0KnRfiJU>
- AHA F.A.S.T. Song – Stroke Signs: Featuring Dee-1 & Tha Hip Hop Doc  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oyszwsdd4AE>
- CDC: Tips from Former Smokers: Blanche’s Story  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P6TFRFiu6Ug>

# HEALTH DISPARITIES

## VIDEOS/ARTICLES

### AFRICAN AMERICAN POPULATIONS

- CDC: Prince Quire's Stroke Story  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J8U5v5wOn-o>
- National Stroke Association: Faces of Stroke Ambassadors: Pamela and Diana  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RLDB4GmwRaA&feature=youtu.be>

### AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKA NATIVE POPULATIONS

- CDC: ACT FAST: 1-2-3! Youth of the Anishnawbe Nation Learn About Stroke  
<https://youtu.be/nbiWfhXyqEU>

### SPANISH SPEAKING POPULATIONS

- National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke: Ataque cerebral: Conozca los síntomas y actúe a tiempo  
<https://stroke.nih.gov/materials/video.htm>
- National Stroke Association: Las minorías y los ataques cerebrovasculares  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wUYc8EDnx-U>
- Ictus (dibujos animados)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tb078TioCFc>

### ASIAN POPULATIONS

- [Dangerous bleeding strokes disproportionately affect Asian American, Pacific Islander](#)
- [Asian Pacific Stroke Organization – Stroke Support Organizations](#)

## **PRINTED MATERIALS**

### **AFRICAN AMERICAN POPULATIONS**

- Let's Talk About Black Americans and Stroke  
<https://www.stroke.org/en/help-and-support/resource-library/lets-talk-about-stroke/black-americans>
- African Americans and Heart Disease, Stroke | American Heart Association  
<https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/consumer-healthcare/what-is-cardiovascular-disease/african-americans-and-heart-disease-stroke>
- African Americans | For Specific Groups | Tips From Former Smokers | CDC  
<https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/groups/african-american.html>
- Sickle Cell Disease and Stroke | American Stroke Association  
<https://www.stroke.org/en/about-stroke/stroke-in-children/sickle-cell-disease>

### **AMERICAN INDIAN / ALASKA NATIVE POPULATIONS**

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Honoring the Gift of Heart Health. A Heart Health Educator's Manual for Alaska Natives  
[https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/files/docs/resources/heart/ak\\_manual.pdf](https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/files/docs/resources/heart/ak_manual.pdf)
- Indian Health Services: Heart Health  
<https://www.ihs.gov/forpatients/healthtopics/hearthealth/>

### **SPANISH SPEAKING POPULATIONS**

- Massachusetts Health Promotion Clearing House. This website contains posters, brochures, fact sheets and other materials available in Spanish, as well as Portuguese, Khmer, Haitian Creole and English.  
<https://massclearinghouse.ehs.state.ma.us/category/HDSP.html>
- National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke: Spanish Toolkit. This toolkit contains a video, brochures and a flipchart, and is available for \$35.  
<https://stroke.nih.gov/materials/spanish-stroke-toolkit.htm>
- National Stroke Association: Recursos en Español  
<https://www.stroke.org/en/about-stroke/recursos-en-espanol>
- National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke: Lo Que Necesita Saber Sobre Los Ataques Cerebrales (What You Need to Know About Stroke)

<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/health-information/public-education/know-stroke/shareable-resources/recursos-en-espanol>



## **PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke: Radio PSAs in English and Spanish  
<https://stroke.nih.gov/materials/radio.htm>
- AHA - Community Stroke Prevention Toolkit: includes presentation, discussion points, etc.  
<https://www.stroke.org/en/help-and-support/resource-library/prevention-toolkit>
- Together to End Stroke PSA  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tSWFrV0fero>

# INTERVIEW GUIDE

The following interview guide can be used when interviewing a stroke survivor in your community.

## Preparing for the interview and publishing the article

1. Identify a stroke survivor to interview.
2. When contacting the interviewee to obtain consent for the interview:
  - Introduce yourself.
  - Describe the purpose of the interview.
  - Explain that you have a few questions prepared and offer to show them the questions ahead of time.
  - Reassure them that their participation is entirely optional.
  - Answer any questions that they might have about the use of their name and, if applicable, photograph.
  - Make sure that they understand where the interview will be posted and the implications of that exposure (how many members of the public may see their name or photo).
3. Submit the interview for inclusion in an upcoming agency newsletter, bulletin, or on social media.

## Suggested Interview Questions

- Tell us a little about yourself.
- When did you experience the stroke and how did you know that you were having a stroke?
- What happened next? What steps did you take to get help?
- What treatment did you receive at the hospital and what was your rehabilitation process like?
- What steps do you take now to prevent stroke?
- What advice would you give to someone who has recently experienced a stroke?
- What message do you have for the general public about stroke and stroke prevention?

## **Suggested Article Structure and Text**

### **I. Introduction**

Every 40 seconds, someone in the United States has a stroke. Strokes are a leading cause of disability in the United States, but did you know that there are steps that you can take to reduce the impact of stroke and improve stroke recovery? With stroke, it is critical to think and BE **FAST!** B- Balance; E- Eyes; F-Face drooping; A-Arm weakness; S-Speech difficulty; T-Time to call 9-1-1. If you, or someone around you, is showing these signs of stroke, do not hesitate and call 9-1-1 right away. By doing so, you are giving yourself or another individual the best chance of saving a life and minimizing the long-term effects of stroke.

Here at [*your agency name*], we would like to take this opportunity to highlight the story of a stroke survivor-an individual who has thrived after stroke. We took some time to get to know [*name of interviewee*], who shares with us [*his/her*] story of resilience.

### **II. Interview**

### **III. Conclusion**

Remember - stroke can happen to anyone at any time. Knowing the warning signs of stroke and calling 9-1-1 immediately can make you a stroke hero-both for yourself and others in your community.

# SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date :

Media Contact :

Name :

Phone :

Email :

## THINK AND B.E.F.A.S.T. IN CASE OF A STROKE

Strokes affect more than 800,000 US citizens yearly. That's why it's important to think B.E.F.A.S.T. when someone near you displays stroke symptoms.

What does B.E.F.A.S.T. mean? It's an acronym for a simple way to determine whether a person might be having a stroke. Look for SUDDEN CHANGES:

<i>Balance</i>	Is there a loss of balance or sudden onset of dizziness?
<i>Eyes</i>	Is there a loss of vision, double vision or unclear vision?
<i>Face</i>	Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop?
<i>Arms</i>	Ask the person to raise both arms. Is one arm or leg weak or unable to move? Does it drift downward?
<i>Speech</i>	Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence. Is speech slurred or hard to understand? Are they unable to speak? Are they not making sense?
<i>Time</i>	Time to call 911 if you see any one of these signs. Note the time symptoms started, or when the person was last known to be normal and tell the medics or hospital staff.

### Other additional stroke symptoms may include:

- Sudden, severe headache with no known cause.

Acting FAST is crucial. Many people experiencing stroke die or are disabled because they don't get the appropriate medical treatment in time. The sooner people are treated, the higher the chances they'll

recover and return to normal activities. Activating EMS, by calling 9-1-1, speeds treatment. Unfortunately, fewer than half of stroke patients use 9-1-1 to get to the hospital. Patients arriving by ambulance get treated faster in part because medics call ahead so the hospital is ready for the patient when they arrive.

Stroke is the fifth leading cause of death nationwide. It is also a leading cause of severe, long-term disability. The number of strokes is projected to increase by 20.5 percent between 2016 and 2030, and the direct medical costs for treating stroke are expected to almost triple, from \$71.6 billion to \$184.1 billion by 2030, according to the American Stroke Association, a division of the American Heart Association.

May is Stroke Awareness Month, with a focus on improving the number of stroke patients who receive lifesaving treatment in time. Stroke Awareness Month is the American Stroke Association's and the National Stroke Association's call to increase awareness of stroke, and to inspire citizens to learn about the signs of stroke and how to react.

# **EXAMPLES OF PUBLIC & EMPLOYEE EDUCATION ACTIVITIES FOR STROKE AWARENESS MONTH (MAY) OR WORLD STROKE DAY (OCTOBER 29<sup>TH</sup>)**

- Play stroke videos in strategic locations (see section above with links to videos)
- Staff in-services
- Educate through employee wellness programs like SmartHealth and give points
- Do BE FAST awareness education to hospital valet, housekeeping, transport, registration, and food service teams
- Post Stroke education fliers in exam rooms, waiting rooms, bathrooms, by drinking fountains, on fridges
- Printed java jackets/coffee sleeves
- Give out stroke prevention bags and have a table at farmers markets
- Get BE FAST on school digital boards
- Neuroanatomy class for non-neuro nurses with edible teaching aids (body part gummies include brains, Oriental Trading; Google gummy brains; there are even life-size gummy brains, and chocolate and Jell-O molds)
- Put BE FAST on Pharmacy bags given to patient when prescription is filled
- Make BE FAST buttons to give out to staff or community
- Order BE FAST bracelets, t-shirts, ties, socks or other swag to give out
- Have a coloring or drawing contest to win prizes or use winner as promotional item
- Daily internet messages on hospitals website
- Tweets and retweets
- Facebook messages, Facebook live events – interview EMS, stroke coordinators, neurologists, stroke survivors etc.
- Infographics
- Health fairs
- Table tents in cafeterias
- Ambulance wraps
- Messaging on buses
- Customize crossword puzzle or word search for staff to turn in for prizes
- “Clots and Coffee”: Dress up as blood clot and clot retriever and deliver coffee to units while educating or quizzing them on stroke facts
- Deliver Stroke Education booklets/pocket cards/signage to Meals on Wheels in your area
- Media outreach
- Physician talk
- Get interview or PSAs on local radio
- Info tables, blood pressure checks at health fairs
- Presentation/handouts/blood pressure checks at the local senior centers or local library on S/S of a stroke, prevention, and general stroke information

- Do a kid focused library activity with a kid STROKE awareness book, handouts, coloring contest, etc. (see below for links with kids STROKE awareness books)
- Collaborate with local high schools and do a “Friday Night Lights Out for Stroke” event during the month of October or on World Stroke Day (See Friday Night Lights Out from Stroke details below)
- Perform blood pressure checks with promotional items at local events, grocery stores, library, school games, or track meets etc...
- BE FAST flyers in hospital/other billing statements
- Hospitals and hospital systems often have thousands of employees so even internal promotion can reach a wide audience
- Collaborate with local public health & EMS
- Work with area [Aging Ahead](#) or [Missouri Association of Area Agencies on Aging](#) to reach the senior population through their vast network
- Attend EMS conferences and regional meetings to promote stroke awareness and give out promotional items.
- Reach out to area local long term care, assisted living, and home health agencies to collaborate messaging to employees and patients

## Children’s Stroke Awareness books

- My Michigan Health - Children's Storybook Grandpa's Crooked Smile Teaches Warning Signs of Stroke <https://www.mymichigan.org/conditions-treatments/neuroscience/stroke/childrens-book/>
- International Alliance for Pediatric Stroke – Parents and Family page includes books and stories. <https://iapediatricstroke.org/family-resources/>
- American Stroke Association – Stroke Hero <https://www.stroke.org/-/media/Stroke-Files/About-Stroke/Stroke-in-Children/Stroke-Heroes-Toolkit-FINAL-Digital.pdf>

## Stroke Care Giver Resources

- AHA - [Stroke Family Warmline](#)
- AHA – [Caregiver guide to Stroke](#)
- AHA – [Caregiver Resources](#)

# Friday Night Lights Out for Stroke tool Kit

## What is Friday Night Lights Out for Stroke?

- Friday Night Lights Out for Stroke is a simple public service event that helps raise stroke awareness and high school involvement through handing out stroke information of wallet cards, bracelets, coloring pages, etc.... at a local high school football game.

## Who should be involved?

- Key stakeholders can include:
  - Hospital Stroke leaders/team
  - Emergency Management Systems (EMS) crews (There are EMS crews already at football games).
  - High School administrator/Counselors
  - High School club (highly encouraged) Reach out to health related clubs or clubs that want community service opportunities. Example: HOSA, FCCLA, KAYS, FFA, SADD

## What are the steps to do Friday Night Lights Out for Stroke?

- In early August look at local school calendars to select a football game in the month of October for the event. If there is a game on World Stroke Day Oct. 29<sup>th</sup> even better!
- Once a game is selected, send the *letter to schools* to the principal or superintendent to request permission for the event. In the letter, request a club to participate if there is a desire. (not required but highly encouraged).
- Once a game is selected order Stroke handouts from one of the following:
  - [Help Spread Stroke Awareness | Stroke Awareness](#)
  - [Items | Stroke \(genentechmaterials.com\)](#)
  - [Patient Education Resources – KISS \(kissnetwork.us\)](#)
  - [Stroke Resource Library | American Stroke Association](#)
- Gather volunteers from your healthcare institution to help (generally you only need 2 people per admission gate).
- Reach out and invite local EMS service crews to join you at the event to help pass out the handouts.
- Arrive at the game 1 hour before kickoff to hand out the stroke awareness information.
- Once the game starts you are done!
- OPTIONAL Public Service Messaging:
  - Have the school read the short PSA during half-time or between quarters at the game.
  - If a club volunteers to help, ask to present a short stroke presentation to the club on the Thursday before or the Friday of the event.
  - Take pictures and post the work on Facebook and Twitter with Stroke awareness information.
  - Send in a new release with a picture to the local paper.



## TEMPLATE NEWS RELEASE – World Stroke Day October 29<sup>th</sup>, 20\_\_

Contact:

{Name}

{Title}

{email & phone}

Community Healthcare System- Onaga/St. Marys urges the community to be aware of stroke symptoms in recognition of World Stroke Day, Oct. 29<sup>th</sup>, 20\_\_.

October 29<sup>th</sup> is World Stroke Day. In order to help the community, understand the risk factors and symptoms of stroke, a leading cause of death and serious long-term disability in the United States, [HOSPITAL NAME] is teaming up with local schools to raise stroke awareness at a Friday Night: Lights out for stroke event at the football game at \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ vs. \_\_\_\_\_.

“Time is crucial in the treatment of stroke, as on average, every 40 seconds someone in the United States has a stroke and roughly every four minutes someone dies from a stroke,” said [HOSPITAL SPOKESPERSON]. “The earlier a stroke is recognized and the patient receives medical attention, the greater chance of recovery.”

Strokes occur when a blood vessel carrying oxygen and vital nutrients to the brain is either blocked by a clot or ruptures. When this occurs, part of the brain is deprived of blood and oxygen, destroying millions of valuable nerve cells within minutes.

[HOSPITAL NAME] is an [INSERT TYPE OF STROKE HOSPITAL (comprehensive, primary stroke center, Emergent Stroke Ready Hospital (ESRH), etc....)]

“If you suspect a stroke, remember the words BE FAST –B-E - F-A-S-T,” said [HOSPITAL PHYSICIAN] “F is for face - is your face drooping? A is for arms – can you lift both arms? S is for speech – are you slurring your words and T is for time, call 9-1-1 immediately because with stroke, time is brain.”<sup>1</sup>

The primary stroke symptoms include:

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

### About Stroke

Stroke is a leading cause of death and serious, long-term disability in the United States.<sup>1</sup> According to the American Stroke Association, approximately 800,000 people experience a new or recurrent stroke each year, and 87 percent of these are ischemic strokes.<sup>1</sup> An acute ischemic stroke

occurs when an obstruction, such as a blood clot, blocks blood flow to the brain. The obstruction deprives the brain of blood and oxygen, destroying valuable nerve cells in the affected area within minutes. The resulting damage can lead to significant disability including paralysis, speech problems and emotional difficulties.

Treatment may be available if you get to the emergency room immediately upon recognition of stroke symptoms. Leading a healthy lifestyle, including lowering risk factors like high blood pressure and weight, can also help reduce your stroke risk.

For more information about stroke, visit [www.strokeawareness.com](http://www.strokeawareness.com), America Stroke Association at [www.stroke.org](http://www.stroke.org), and the Kansas Initiative for Stroke Survival at [www.kissnetwork.us](http://www.kissnetwork.us).

About [HOSPITAL]

[INSERT BOILERPLATE]

###

1

Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics – 2023 update: a report from the American Heart Association.

**Public Service Announcement for halftime of the game, on the radio or school TV.**

**Stroke Public Service Announcement:**

**Title: Tick Tick Tick**

[Estimated time: 48 sec]

**Note to Radio Host**—consider beginning this Public Service Announcement with a ticking clock sound effect (similar to 60 minutes)

**ANNOUNCER VOICE OVER:**

**Person 1:**

*Did you know? Stroke is the leading cause of disability in the US. About every 40 seconds, someone suffers from a stroke. That's about as much time as it takes to listen to this message.*

**Person 2:**

*For stroke, you need to know what to look for, so you can act BE FAST. B-E-F-A-S-T. B means Balance. Can they have a loss of balance or dizziness? E means Eyes. Do they have vision changes? F means Face. Do they have an uneven smile? A means Arm. When lifting both arms, is one hard to keep up? S means Speech. Are they slurring their words? And T means Time. As soon as you see any of these symptoms, call 911. The sooner you call 911, the better the chance of recovery.*

**Person 1:**

*So, remember, BE FAST if you think you see someone having a stroke. You can learn about the signs and symptoms of stroke, so you know how to recognize a stroke when you see it—and BE FAST.*

SFX: ticking stops.

FADE OUT.

## Letter for Schools template:

[School representative name]

[School Name]

[School Address]

[School town/zip]

Dear [SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE],

We have a simple health project in mind for the community and we need your help. The effort concerns stroke awareness and we'd like to hold the event at your home football game on October \_\_\_\_, 20\_\_.

Stroke is a leading cause of serious long-term disability in the United States. Every 40 seconds someone has a stroke. October 29<sup>th</sup> has been designated, world-wide, as a day of stroke prevention and awareness. Our project has been planned by the Kansas Initiative for Stroke Survival (KISS), [your organization] and [any additional organization like EMS joining you].

The project, "Friday Night Lights Out for Stroke" works like this:

- Before the football game we will hand out stroke awareness wallet cards, bracelets, and materials. If you have a student club that would like to help out they are welcome to join us. We would like to plan to position ourselves at the admission gate(s) before the game.
- We also have a public service announcement that could be read at halftime if you would like. In in the past, we have encouraged a student volunteer from a club to do this as well but the announcer for the game could work too.

We will contact you within a few days of receiving this letter to see if you are interested and to explain the project further. We are looking forward to partnering with [School name] for this community health event!

Best Regards,

[Lead organizer name/title]