

Why you must Act F.A.S.T.

A stroke is a 'brain attack', caused by a disturbance in the blood supply to the brain. It is a medical emergency that requires immediate medical attention. So recognising the signs of stroke and calling 999 for an ambulance is crucial.

The sooner somebody who is having a stroke gets urgent medical attention, the better their chances of a good recovery.

Transient ischaemic attack (TIA) is also called "mini-stroke". It is similar to a stroke and has the same signs, but gets better within 24 hours. However, it could be a warning sign of a more serious stroke, so it also needs to be treated as an emergency by calling 999 immediately.

Rapid diagnosis of TIA allows urgent steps to be taken to reduce the risk of having a stroke. If you think you have had a TIA in the past and have not sought treatment, contact your GP.

Reducing your risk

Some people are more at risk of having a stroke if they also have certain other medical conditions. These include:

- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Atrial fibrillation (an irregular heartbeat)
- Diabetes

It is important that these conditions are carefully monitored and treated.

The risk of having a stroke is higher amongst people in certain ethnic groups, including South Asian, African and Caribbean. This is partly because high blood pressure and diabetes are more common in these groups.

There are also lifestyle factors that may significantly increase the risk of having a stroke. They include:

- Smoking
- Being overweight
- Lack of exercise
- Poor diet
- Exceeding the recommended daily alcohol limit*

Leading a healthy, active lifestyle is vital to help reduce your risk of having a stroke.

For more information on preventing a stroke and F.A.S.T. go to the Irish Heart Foundation websites www.stroke.ie or www.irisheart.ie or talk to an Irish Heart Foundation nurse in confidence on our **Heart and Stroke Helpline 1890 432 787**, Monday to Friday, 10am to 5pm.



F

ACE

**HAS THEIR FACE FALLEN ON ONE SIDE?
CAN THEY SMILE?**



A

RMS

**CAN THEY RAISE BOTH ARMS AND
KEEP THEM THERE?**



S

PEECH

IS THEIR SPEECH SLURRED?



T

IME TO CALL 999

**IF YOU SEE ANY SINGLE
ONE OF THESE SIGNS**

* Experts recommend that adult women should drink less than 11 standard alcoholic drinks per week. Adult men should drink less than 17 standard drinks per week. Drinking should be spread out over the week and keep some days alcohol-free.