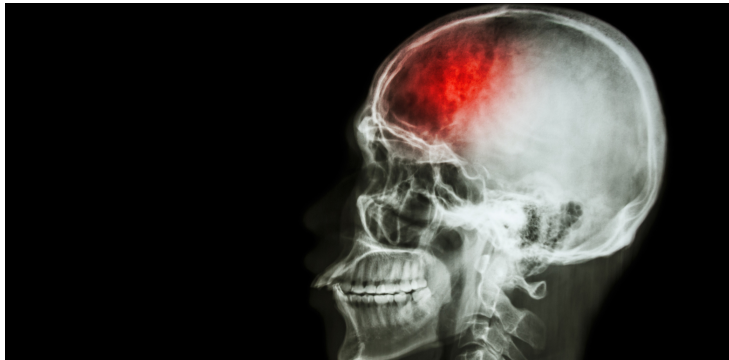


STROKE

PUBLIC HEALTH BRIEF

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OVERVIEW¹

What is a stroke?

According to the CDC, stroke is the leading cause of death in the United States. Stroke occurs when something blocks blood supply to part of the brain or when a blood vessel in the brain bursts. In either case, parts of the brain become damaged or die. A stroke can cause lasting brain damage, long-term disability, or even death.

What happens to your brain during a stroke?

The brain controls our movements, stores memories, and is the source of our thoughts, emotions, and language. The brain also controls many functions of the body, like breathing and digestion. To work properly, your brain needs oxygen. Your arteries deliver oxygen-rich blood to all parts of your brain. If something happens to block the flow of blood, brain cells start to die within minutes, because they can't get oxygen. This causes a stroke.

Types of stroke:

Ischemic stroke

This type of stroke is more common and occurs when blood clots or other particles are blocking the blood vessels to the brain.

Hemorrhagic stroke

This type of stroke happens when an artery in the brain leaks blood or breaks open, causing high pressure on brain cells, which damages them. Conditions such as high blood pressure or aneurysms, which cause arteries to stretch or burst, can cause a hemorrhagic stroke.

HARFORD COUNTY STROKE SMART PROCLAMATION⁵

On November 3, 2023, the University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Health (UMUCH), the Harford County Health Department, Harford County Government, Harford County Council, and stroke survivors celebrated Harford County's newly declared Stroke Smart status at the Aberdeen Medical Center as part of a Stroke Smart county. UMUCH and its partners are committed to educating the public on the signs/symptoms of stroke, as well as, the importance of calling 911.

DATA^{3,4}Stroke Hospitalizations

2019	3.95 per 1,000
2020	3.53 per 1,000
2021	3.60 per 1,000
2022	3.86 per 1,000

Stroke Age-Adjusted Death Rate

2017	36.6 per 100,000
2018	37.4 per 100,000
2019	37.8 per 100,000
2020	39.6 per 100,000
2021	41.3 per 100,000

WHAT TO DO IF SOMEONE IS HAVING A STROKE?¹

If you think someone may be having a stroke, B.E. F.A.S.T. and do the following test:

B—Balance: Does the person have a loss of balance?

E—Eyes: Ask the person if they have blurred vision.

F—Face: Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop?

A—Arms: Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

S—Speech: Ask the person to repeat a simple phrase. Is the speech slurred or strange?

T—Time: If you see any of these signs, call 9-1-1 immediately.

Note the **time** when any symptoms first appear and immediately **call 9-1-1**, do not drive.

CAUSES & TREATMENT²

Causes

- High blood pressure
- Obesity
- Physical inactivity
- Poor diet
- Smoking
- Age
- High stress levels
- Family history/genetics
- Viral infections or conditions

Treatment

- Preventative Medications
 - Blood pressure medication
 - Tissue plasminogen activator (tPA)
- Medical procedures
 - Aneurysm clipping
 - Blood transfusion
 - Draining excessive fluid
 - Surgery

Sources:

1. Center for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/stroke/index.htm>
2. National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/stroke/causes>
3. Chesapeake Regional Information System for our Patients. <https://reports.crisphealth.org/#dashboard>
4. Maryland Vital Statistics. <https://health.maryland.gov/vsa/Pages/reports.aspx>
5. Harford County Health Department. <https://harfordcountyhealth.com/>