If you were working when you had your stroke, you may wonder if you will be able to go back to work.

Your ability to go back to work will depend on:
- how you feel
- how you have been affected by your stroke
- the type of work that you do

Your stroke may have affected your body and mind. As well as physical changes, you may:
- feel tired
- have memory loss
- have trouble concentrating

Allow enough time for your recovery. Most changes will get better with time; but some may not.

When you are ready to think about going back to work, talk with your health care team. These team members can help you identify your strengths and needs:
- social worker
- occupational therapist
- vocational rehabilitation therapist
- doctor
Depending on your abilities, you may need to change the way you work. For example, you may need to:

- learn to do things with one hand
- do certain tasks sitting down instead of standing
- be patient with yourself
- not put pressure on yourself to perform at the same level you did before your stroke

Your doctor will:

- Decide when you are healthy enough to go back to work.
- Work with your rehabilitation team and your employer to plan a gradual return to your work schedule and responsibilities.

If you are disabled, your employer is responsible for making reasonable adjustments to your job description and the workplace.

If you are unable to do the same job, consider your choices. You may want to retrain for a different job, retire or do volunteer work.

**Questions about work**

- Am I able to return to work?
- When will I be able to return to work?
- What things might get in the way of returning to work?
- Who can assess my ability to return to work? Can I see a vocational rehabilitation therapist? What other services or programs could do this?
- Is my workplace accessible? Can I park or use transit, get into the building and to my workspace, use my workspace and the washroom?
• Have I talked with my boss about the expectations and responsibilities of my job? Are any adjustments needed to match my abilities? Have we agreed on what I will do?
• Is it possible to have flexible hours or work from home?
• If I am not earning enough, can I get financial help? What government assistance programs are available? Am I eligible for funding?
• What short-term and long-term disability benefits do I have at work? Who can I talk to about my benefits (my boss, human resources or occupational health)?
• If I can’t return to my job, what else would I like to do? Train for another job? Retire? Find a volunteer job?

Resources about working

GENERAL INFORMATION

• Let’s Talk About Stroke,
  a guide developed by the Heart and Stroke Foundation, pages 59-60

FINANCIAL SUPPORT (see also ‘Money Matters’)

• Ontario Works
  provides temporary financial assistance to help cover the costs of your basic needs and employment assistance to help you prepare for and find a job. www.ontario.ca/socialassistance - check the website to find the office nearest you.
• **Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) – Income Support** provides long-term financial assistance to people who cannot work for medical reasons or because of disability. [www.ontario.ca/socialassistance](http://www.ontario.ca/socialassistance) - check the website for the office nearest you.

• **Employment Insurance (EI)**
  provides temporary financial assistance to unemployed Canadians who have lost their job through no fault of their own, while they look for work or upgrade their skills. [www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/sc/ei/index.shtml](http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/sc/ei/index.shtml) - check the website for the Service Canada Centre nearest you.

• **Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) – Income Support**
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**FINDING WORK AND JOB TRAINING**

• **Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) – Employment Supports**
  helps people with disabilities find a job. [www.ontario.ca/socialassistance](http://www.ontario.ca/socialassistance) - check the website for the office nearest you.

• **Job Opportunity Information Network (JOIN):**
  Many of the providers of Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) employment services are part of this. [www.joininfo.ca/toronto.php](http://www.joininfo.ca/toronto.php)
• **Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities**
  helps people with disabilities prepare for, obtain and maintain employment or self-employment – in particular those who are not eligible for Employment Insurance (EI) benefits.
  [www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/funding_programs/ofpd/index.shtml](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/funding_programs/ofpd/index.shtml) - check the website for the Service Canada Centre nearest you.

• **Canadian Pension Plan Vocational Rehabilitation**
  is a voluntary program designed to help people receiving CPP disability benefits return to work. [www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/oas-cpp/cpp_disability/physguide/work.shtml#help](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/oas-cpp/cpp_disability/physguide/work.shtml#help) or call 1-800-461-3422

• **Bridgepoint Health – Vocational Rehabilitation**
  is a government funded day treatment program that assists people to return to work. [www.bridgepointhealth.ca/daytreatment](http://www.bridgepointhealth.ca/daytreatment) or call 416-461-8252 ext. 2371

• **Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work**
  promotes and supports meaningful and equitable employment of persons with disabilities. [www.ccrw.org](http://www.ccrw.org) or call 416-260-3060 (Toronto) or 1-800-664-0925

• **March of Dimes Employment Services**
  provides job training and helps people with disabilities find employment. [www.marchofdimes.ca/EN/programs/employment/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.marchofdimes.ca/EN/programs/employment/Pages/default.aspx) or call 416-425-3463 or 1-800-263-3463

• **Canadian Paraplegic Association (CPA)**
  can assist clients with physical disabilities other than spinal cord injury. [www.canparaplegic.org/en](http://www.canparaplegic.org/en)
• Centre for Independent Living in Toronto
  provides people with disabilities with employment information, referrals and job opportunities. [http://cilt.ca/information.aspx](http://cilt.ca/information.aspx) or call 416-599-2458

• Community Head Injury Resource Services
  offers a comprehensive Employment Services program to ensure that a variety of supported, vocational opportunities are provided to individuals with a range of abilities and employment-related goals. [www.chirs.com](http://www.chirs.com) or call 416-240-8000

• Ability Edge is a national internship program for graduates with disabilities. [www.abilityedge.ca](http://www.abilityedge.ca) or call 416-977-3343 or 1-888-507-3343

• Corbrook
  develops and provides opportunities for meaningful work and personal development for persons with varying levels of abilities. [www.corbrook.net](http://www.corbrook.net) or call 416-245-5565 (West Toronto) or 416-431-9000 (East Toronto)

• JVS Toronto – AbilityWorks
  assists persons with mental health, developmental, learning and physical disabilities, injuries or illnesses to transition to employment. [www.jvstoronto.org/index.php?page=abilityworks](http://www.jvstoronto.org/index.php?page=abilityworks) or call 416-787-1151

• Centre for Information and Community Services
  helps immigrants to achieve equal access to the Canadian job market through different employment programs and services. [http://cicscanada.com/content/23/Employment_Services](http://cicscanada.com/content/23/Employment_Services) or call 416-292-7510 ext. 118
• **COSTI – Rehabilitation and Training Services Program**  
  provides educational, social, and employment services to help immigrants in the Toronto area attain self-sufficiency.  

• **BALANCE for Blind Adults**  
  is a non-profit agency that partners with government and community services to enable people with vision loss to lead independent lives.  
  [www.balancefba.org](http://www.balancefba.org) or call 416-292-7510

• **Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB)**  
  offers career and employment services for individuals with visual impairment.  
  [www.cnib.ca/en/services/vision-support/range](http://www.cnib.ca/en/services/vision-support/range) or call 1-800-563-2642

• **Inclusive Design Research Centre – Employment Accommodation Services**  
  is a multidisciplinary support team that assists in the hiring, retraining, retention or advancement of persons with disabilities. There is a fee.  
  [http://idrc.ocad.ca/index.php/services/34-services/consultation/58](http://idrc.ocad.ca/index.php/services/34-services/consultation/58) or call 416-977-6000 ext. 3967

• **WORKink**  
  [http://workink.com](http://workink.com) – Canada’s largest virtual employment resource centre for job seekers with disabilities.

• **Link Up Employment Services for Persons with Disabilities**  
  is a not-for-profit group mandated to increase training and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities throughout the Greater Toronto Area.  
  [www.linkup.ca](http://www.linkup.ca) or call 416-413-4922
• **JobStart**  
is a community based, not-for-profit agency connecting people looking for work with employers looking to hire.  
[www.jobstart-cawl.org](http://www.jobstart-cawl.org) or call 416-231-2295

**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AND JOB TRAINING**

• **Charity Village**  
[www.charityvillage.com](http://www.charityvillage.com) – Canada’s supersite for the non-profit sector – 3,500 pages of news, jobs, resources, how-to articles, volunteer and event listings, educational opportunities.

• **Volunteer Toronto**  
[www.volunteertoronto.ca](http://www.volunteertoronto.ca) – connects people with volunteer opportunities in Toronto.