

Stroke

A stroke occurs when the blood flow to the brain is decreased or stopped. The blood flow can be blocked from a blood clot, plaque or a leak in a blood vessel. Sometimes the blood flow to the brain is blocked for a brief time. If you have signs of a stroke, but the signs go away in minutes to hours this is called a TIA or transient ischemic attack or “mini stroke”. This is a strong warning that there is a problem and a stroke could occur in the future. When the blood flow to the brain is blocked causing permanent damage, it is called a stroke. Tests can be done to find the type, location and cause of the blockage to the blood flow of the brain.

Signs

The effects of a stroke depend on the location and amount of damage to the brain. Signs are sudden and may include:

- Numbness, tingling or weakness in the face, arm or leg, often only on one side of the body
- Confusion or trouble understanding
- Problems speaking
- Problems seeing out of one or both eyes
- Dizziness or trouble with balance, coordination or walking
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause

Your Care

Call 911 as soon as you have any signs of a stroke. The goal of care is to stop further damage to the brain. It is important to get to the hospital right away.