

View this article online at: patient.info/health/dealing-with-a-stroke

Dealing with a Stroke



This leaflet is created from first aid advice provided by St John Ambulance, the nation's leading first aid charity. This advice is no substitute for first aid training - [find a training course near you](#).

A **stroke** is caused by a portion of the brain being starved of oxygen. This can be due to a burst blood vessel or a clot blocking a blood vessel. The lack of oxygen causes damage to the brain. The long-term effects of a stroke depend on what part of the brain is involved and on how much tissue is affected.

To recognise if someone has suffered a stroke, perform the **FAST** (Face, Arms, Speech, Time) test:

1. Look at their face:
 - Ask them to smile.
 - If they have had a stroke, they may only be able to smile on one side; the other side of the mouth may droop.
2. Ask them to raise both arms:
 - If they have had a stroke, they may only be able to lift one arm.
3. Find out whether they can speak:
 - Ask them to speak.
 - If they have had a stroke, they may struggle to respond appropriately.
4. Time to call 999/112/911:
 - Call 999/112/911 for emergency help.
 - Tell the operator you have used the **FAST** test and suspect a stroke.
 - Keep them comfortable and supported.

Note: these hints are no substitute for thorough knowledge of first aid. St John Ambulance holds [first aid courses](#) throughout the country.

Adapted from the St John Ambulance leaflet: [stroke](#). Copyright for this leaflet is with St John Ambulance.

Disclaimer: This article is for information only and should not be used for the diagnosis or treatment of medical conditions. EMIS has used all reasonable care in compiling the information but make no warranty as to its accuracy. Consult a doctor or other health care professional for diagnosis and treatment of medical conditions. For details see our [conditions](#).

Original Author: St John Ambulance	Current Version: St John Ambulance	Peer Reviewer: St John Ambulance
Document ID: 28673 (v1)	Last Checked: 15/08/2013	Next Review: 14/08/2016

Discuss Dealing with a Stroke and find more trusted resources at [Patient](#).

Ask your doctor about Patient Access

- 🔑 Book appointments
- 🔑 Order repeat prescriptions
- 🔑 View your medical record
- 🔑 Create a personal health record (iOS only)



Simple, quick and convenient.
Visit patient.info/patient-access
or search 'Patient Access'

Like us.
it's good for you!



Like us on **facebook**
fb.com/patient