WHAT IS A STROKE?

A stroke occurs when the blood supply to part of the brain is blocked or when a blood vessel in the brain bursts, stopping the blood flow and causing damage to part of the brain. A stroke is sometimes called a brain attack. There are two main types of stroke: ischemic and hemorrhagic stroke.

An ischemic stroke occurs when there is blockage in a blood vessel supplying oxygen to the brain. The majority of all strokes fall into this category.

Hemorrhagic strokes occur when a blood vessel in the brain ruptures.

A transient ischemic attack (TIA) is a temporary blockage in the blood supply to the brain. Sometimes a TIA is called a mini-stroke. It is a warning that the person is at risk for a more serious stroke.

Stroke in Nebraska

Prevalence

- In 2016, 2.8% of adults reported ever being told they had a stroke.
- The stroke prevalence in Nebraska was 1.4 times higher for females than males in 2016.

Hospitalization

- In 2016, 4,309 inpatient hospitalizations occurred among Nebraska residents due to stroke.
- The average hospitalization length of stay for stroke was 7 days in 2016.
- Approximately 1 out of 3 persons hospitalized for stroke were under 65 years of age.

Death

- Stroke was the fourth leading cause of death in Nebraska in 2016, claiming the lives of 784 residents of all deaths (with 16,207 deaths).
- In 2016, strokes were responsible for 17% of all cardiovascular deaths in Nebraska.
- The stroke death rate in Nebraska has been steadily declining (Figure 1).

Footnotes:

Notes: Age-adjusted rate per 100,000 population (2000 U.S standard population). Population estimates are calculated by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.
Stroke Modifiable Risk Factors Among Nebraskan Adults
Anyone can have a stroke at any age, but certain factors can increase your chances of having a stroke, and it is important to understand your risk and how to lower it. 80% of strokes can be prevented.\(^5\)

![Risk Factors](image)

**Signs & Symptoms**
A stroke is a serious medical condition that requires emergency care. Recognize the signs of stroke FAST:

- **F**ace drooping or numbness: Ask the person to smile. Does one side droop?
- **A**rm weakness: Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downwards?
- **S**lurred, difficult speech: Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence. Are the words slurred?
- **T**ime to call: If the person exhibits any of these symptoms, call 9-1-1 immediately.

**Stroke Resources**
A list of hospitals that are designated as comprehensive stroke centers, primary stroke centers, or acute stroke ready hospitals can be found at: [http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/nebraskaems/Pages/Stroke.aspx](http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/nebraskaems/Pages/Stroke.aspx)

More information about strokes can be found at:
- American Stroke Association [https://www.strokeassociation.org](https://www.strokeassociation.org)
- Nebraska State Stroke Association [https://nebraskastroke.org](https://nebraskastroke.org)
- Nebraska Stroke Advisory Council [https://nestrokecouncil.org](https://nestrokecouncil.org)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention [https://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/index.htm)
- DHHS Emergency Health Systems Program DHHS.EMSTraumaProgram@Nebraska.gov 402-560-4949

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