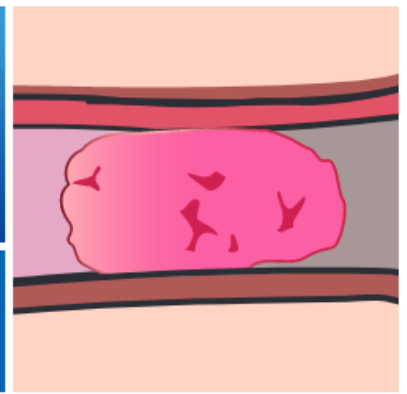


# A blood clot in the brain

## Ischemic stroke



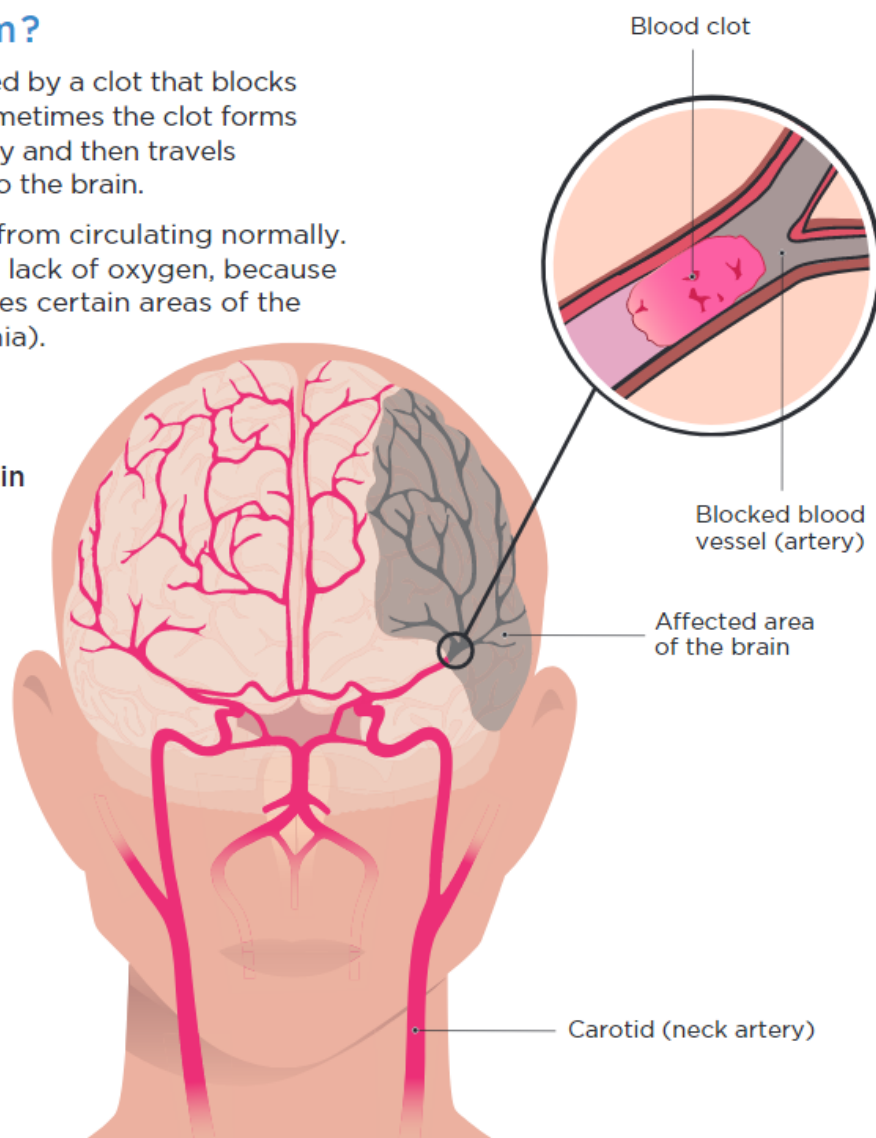
You have just had a stroke, also called a cerebrovascular accident (CVA). This means a clot has formed in a blood vessel in your brain. This fact sheet will help you better understand what is happening to you and what you can do.

### What is this problem?

This type of stroke is caused by a clot that blocks blood flow in the brain. Sometimes the clot forms somewhere else in the body and then travels through the bloodstream to the brain.

This clot keeps the blood from circulating normally. Brain cells then die from a lack of oxygen, because the blood no longer reaches certain areas of the brain (this is called ischemia).

Blood clot in the brain



## What are the main causes of this problem?

- High blood pressure (hypertension)
- High cholesterol (fat) levels
- Diabetes
- Obesity (overweight)
- Lack of exercise
- Poor nutrition
- Tobacco use
- Stress
- Alcohol and drug use



Certain factors increase the risk of stroke: being male, having a family history of stroke, and being elderly.

## What are the main possible symptoms?

You might have some of the following symptoms:

- weakness or paralysis of the right or left side (face, arm or leg, for example)
- difficulty reading, writing, speaking, thinking, learning new things, and calculating
- needing instructions for simple tasks (such as washing your hands)
- vision and memory problems: you forget about objects, people, and even parts of your body on your left-hand side (a phenomenon known as "neglect").
- you may not realize you have this problem, and you get upset because you can't do something (such as opening a door)



Learn the signs and symptoms of stroke so that you can react immediately if you ever have another stroke: **FAST**

### **FAST**

**Face:** is it drooping?

**Arm weakness** (are you unable to lift both arms to the same height?)

**Speech difficulty** (are you having trouble talking?)

**Time:** it's an emergency -- call **911!**

## What can be the consequences of a stroke?

A stroke can change your life and the lives of your loved ones. After a stroke, you may have difficulty doing activities of daily living: eating, dressing, washing, going to the toilet, making a phone call, doing household chores, moving around, etc.

Other areas of your life could also be affected:

- > **Morale and mental health:** emotions, mood, behaviours, memory, thinking, organization.
- > **Physical abilities:** mobility of your hands, arms, and legs; your balance; control of urination and bowel movements; sensations and perceptions.
- > **Communication abilities:** understanding a message; speaking, articulating, or producing sounds.



It takes a lot of effort to recover from a stroke. There are ups and downs. Don't hesitate to ask for help and to talk about your concerns.