

Know the signs of stroke

The **F.A.S.T.** test is an easy way to recognise if someone is having a stroke. Using the **F.A.S.T.** test involves asking three simple questions:

- F.** Check their **FACE**.
Has their mouth drooped?
- A.** Can they lift both **ARMS**?
- S.** Is their **SPEECH** slurred?
Do they understand you?
- T.** **TIME** is critical.
Call 000 if you see any of these symptoms.

There can also be temporary or mini strokes (where symptoms disappear within 24 hours), known as transient ischaemic attacks (TIA). Around one in 11 people who have a TIA will have a stroke within the next 90 days. Therefore, if you have a TIA you should call 000 or contact your doctor immediately. If you are experiencing the signs of stroke or TIA, **please call 000 immediately.**

If you would like to know more about the signs of stroke, stroke treatment and recovery or to find support and services you need, call the StrokeLine 1800 787 653 Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm EST.

For advice or practical help

Talk to a health professional

Your stroke specialist, GP and pharmacist are trained to support you. Your GP or pharmacist can help you decide if you want to use stop smoking medications to help manage your cravings. Medications are cheaper with a script from your GP through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

Call the Quitline 13 7848

Quitline is a friendly, confidential telephone service. For the cost of a local call, trained Quitline counsellors provide tailored information and practical advice just for you. Talking with a Quitline counsellor can increase your chance of stopping smoking successfully. You can also ask your stroke specialist or GP for a referral for Quitline to call you.

Visit www.quit.org.au

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The benefits of **stopping smoking** for people who have experienced **stroke or transient ischaemic attack (TIA)**



 **Quitline 13 7848**

Stopping smoking will help prevent another stroke or transient ischaemic attack (TIA)

Eating well, monitoring your blood pressure, maintaining a healthy weight and being active can help you live well with stroke, as well as prevent another stroke or TIA. If you smoke, it's important to know that **stopping smoking also helps improve your stroke recovery** and reduces your risk of another stroke or TIA.

There is no safe level of smoking.

Continuing to smoke doubles your risk of another stroke

Smoking increases your risk of stroke by increasing blood pressure and reducing oxygen in the blood.

- Smoking also increases the stickiness of blood which can lead to blood clots forming.
- Continuing to smoke doubles your risk of another stroke in the next two and a half years.
- The more you smoke, the higher your risk of another stroke.
- Smoking also increases the likelihood of dying as a result of stroke.

Stopping smoking is the best thing you can do for your health

- People who stop smoking after a first stroke lower their risk of another stroke.
- Stopping smoking will also lower your risk of dying from stroke or having a heart attack.
- It is very important to speak with your stroke specialist to seek advice on stopping smoking.

When you stop smoking

- You no longer **inhale toxic chemicals** in tobacco smoke, which would otherwise enter your bloodstream and damage blood vessels as well as increase your risk of blood clots.
- Within a month, your **blood pressure** returns to its **normal** range.
- The risk of heart attack and stroke starts to **drop immediately**. The risk can drop by as much as half after one year.
- After 15 years your risk of stroke and heart attack is almost the same as that of a person who has never smoked.



"Don't give up quitting. Keep trying. Change the habits. Change the lifestyle."

Mandy, stroke survivor