

What is a Hemorrhagic Stroke?

Your brain is an incredibly complex organ, made up of trillions of neurons that are constantly firing messages to the rest of your body, controlling everything from what you think to what you do.

At the same time, your brain is also receiving information from your senses, ranging from the temperature outside to complex emotional situations.

All of this activity and information is processed in different areas of your brain.

Each area controls different functions, from automatic body functions like sneezing... to walking...to more complex functions like emotions and memory.

To manage all of this work, your brain needs a constant supply of “fuel” in the form of oxygen and nutrients.

This brain fuel is delivered through about 400 miles of tiny vessels in your brain that keep a steady supply of blood flowing to your brain tissue.

When one of these blood vessels is blocked or bursts, a stroke occurs.

There are two kinds of stroke. A stroke that involves a burst or bleeding blood vessel in the brain is called a hemorrhagic stroke. These are not the most common type of stroke.

“Hemorrhagic strokes occur about 15 percent of the time and they often times are the result of an aneurysm or they can be caused by long-term hypertension.”

When your brain is bleeding because of a hemorrhagic stroke, the cells and tissues fed by the damaged blood vessel can't get enough blood.

Without a blood supply, they quickly begin to die.

Further damage may occur if the leaking blood causes swelling and pressure between the brain and the skull. This can damage other areas of your brain.

Some hemorrhagic strokes happen deep inside the brain and some happen on the surface of the brain.

“It can be more dangerous than ischemic stroke because the blood expands pretty quickly, and it's very dense, so they actually need closer monitoring. Usually if somebody comes to a hospital and they find a hemorrhagic stroke they have to spend at least one night in the ICU to make sure that blood is not getting bigger.”

Any type of stroke is serious and can cause permanent damage. Knowing the signs and symptoms is important so you can get help quickly.

The sooner you receive the help you need, the greater the chance of limiting the damage a stroke can cause.

Symptoms of a stroke may come on very suddenly, or they may gradually develop over an hour or more.

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The main signs of hemorrhagic stroke are: Sudden and severe headache usually localized in one area. This is sometimes described as the worst headache of your life or a “thunderclap” headache. Vomiting or Nausea. Neck pain. And loss of consciousness.

Other signs of a stroke can include: Weakness/paralysis or numbness in one or both sides of the body.

Sudden trouble speaking. You may notice slurred speech or aphasia which means you have trouble finding the right words and sentences may not make sense.

Blurry vision, double vision or loss of vision in one or both eyes.

You may have trouble walking, feel dizzy, and notice a loss of coordination.

If you or anyone you know experiences any of these symptoms call 911 right away.

The faster you can get medical help, the more likely that doctors will be able to identify the type of stroke you're having and provide emergency treatment. Getting help fast could mean the difference between permanent damage and an easier recovery.

Remember, getting help quickly can reduce the damage a stroke can cause. Know the signs and symptoms of stroke and get help.