

# Common Effects of Stroke

During a stroke, the flow of blood to your brain is reduced or blocked. This can result in serious symptoms and possibly permanent damage as brain cells die from a lack of blood.

How much damage and what kind of effects you may experience after a stroke depend on how severe the stroke was and how fast you got treatment.

*“I heard about the window of time for the medication if you had a stroke, so I knew time was of the essence, from the time the ambulance got there until the time I was in the ER, it was 25 minutes from the time I called 911, so there was a good chance of me recuperating from the stroke.”*

The effects of a stroke also depend on where the stroke occurred in the brain.

The brain has two sides, or hemispheres, known as the right and left hemispheres.

Each hemisphere controls the opposite side of the body, so if the stroke occurs in the right side of the brain, the left side of the body will be affected and vice versa.

The different areas of the brain also control different functions, like memory or speech.

If you have had a stroke you may:

Have paralysis or weakness on the opposite side of your body from the stroke.

You may not pay any attention to one side of your body and act like it no longer exists.

You may also have trouble paying attention and concentrating on a single task, have trouble remembering certain things like personal information or a time and date, have trouble learning new skills or information, have problems judging distance, be unable to do things you used to do, like tying a shoe, even though you physically can do it and want to do it.

And if you have had a stroke on the left side of your brain you may also have trouble with speech, communication and swallowing.

Some of these problems include:

Trouble finding the right words or speech that sounds garbled or doesn't make sense.

You can't say words even though you want to.

And trouble swallowing.

You may also experience emotional effects after a stroke.

It might be harder to understand facial expressions, whether they are happy or sad, or read body language.

Depression or other feelings of loss related to the stroke and its effects are also common.

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You may show emotions or behaviors you have never felt before. These depend on where the stroke affected your brain.

For example, you may now be: quicker to anger, cautious, disorganized, easily frustrated, more curious, prone to laughing or crying without an obvious reason.

*“I’m more emotional. I see things that really get to me and almost make me cry. It happened quite a bit in the hospital.”*

*“I would say that Bob’s patience or tolerance levels sometimes are a little bit shorter, but I must say he maintains the same humor that he’s always had.”*

Every stroke is different and can affect each person in different ways.

Your recovery plan can help you concentrate on improving the physical effects to your body as well as working on any behavioral and emotional differences you may be experiencing. Work with your healthcare provider and recovery team to take the steps you need to heal.