

# Primary Stroke Center



**The Miriam Hospital**

*Lifespan. Delivering health with care.®*

**Stroke is the fifth leading cause of death and a leading cause of disability in the United States. Approximately 800,000 Americans will suffer a stroke this year; that's someone every 40 seconds.**

## **Types of Stroke**

Two kinds of stroke may inflict disability or death. During a stroke, brain cells die when they are no longer receiving oxygen and nutrients from the blood, or when there is sudden bleeding into or around the brain.

**Ischemic strokes** account for about 83 percent of all cases. An obstruction in a vessel supplying blood to the brain triggers an ischemic stroke.

**Hemorrhagic strokes** account for about 17 percent of cases. A weakened blood vessel that ruptures and bleeds into the surrounding brain tissue causes a hemorrhagic stroke.

**Transient ischemic attacks**, also called **TIA**s, are minor or warning strokes. In a TIA, conditions indicative of an ischemic stroke are present and the typical warning signs develop. However, the obstruction (blood clot) occurs for a short time and then resolves itself. Although the symptoms disappear after a brief time, TIAs are strong predictors of a potential major stroke. Preventive steps should be taken immediately.

## **Our Services**

As a primary stroke center certified by The Joint Commission, The Miriam Hospital provides:

- An acute stroke team, composed of clinicians who are experienced in the diagnosis and treatment of stroke, available around the clock

- The latest in imaging equipment to accurately diagnose stroke and its complications
- Minimally invasive care using the newest therapies, such as clot-dissolving medication
- An intensive care unit coordinated with the stroke team
- A specialized team of nurses dedicated to caring for stroke patients
- Rehabilitation specialists committed to helping stroke survivors regain a comfortable quality of life
- A multispecialty stroke committee that reviews patient care and outcomes monthly

## **Act F.A.S.T.**

If you notice one or more of these signs in yourself or someone else, don't wait. Stroke is a medical emergency. Call 9-1-1 immediately.

Learn how to recognize a stroke **FAST**:

- **F**ace - Drooping on one side of the face
- **A**rms - Weakness or numbness in one arm
- **S**peech - Slurred speech
- **T**ime - Saving time saves brain cells  
(Time to call 9-1-1)

All stroke symptoms are sudden. Do not ignore symptoms even if they go away. Call 9-1-1. Care can begin as soon as the ambulance arrives.

Check the time so you can tell your care team when the stroke started. At the hospital, say "I think I'm having a stroke."

## **Symptoms of Stroke**

The Miriam Hospital's emergency department sees about 10 stroke patients each week. On average, nine hours have passed between the first symptoms of stroke and the patient's arrival at the ED.

Some people don't recognize that they're having symptoms, some may experience subtle symptoms, while others hope the symptoms will disappear with time.

Nine hours is too long to wait. By then, treatment options are limited and full recovery is less likely. If people seek treatment within three hours of the first symptoms, physicians have more options to treat strokes.

The vast majority of strokes are caused by clots that block blood flow to part of the brain. Today's options for effective treatment include aggressive medical, surgical and radiological strategies, including drugs that can dissolve a clot before any lasting damage occurs.

**Time is the key:** The sooner you get to the emergency department, the more treatment options are available and the greater the likelihood that you will not suffer lasting effects of the stroke.

Call 9-1-1 immediately if you experience one or more of these warning signs that come on **suddenly**:

- Numbness or weakness in the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body
- Confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- Difficulty seeing in one or both eyes, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination, severe headache with no known cause

## **Risk Factors**

Several factors increase your risk of stroke. The more you have, the greater your likelihood of having a stroke.

You can't control factors such as age, family health history and gender, but you can modify others, such as physical activity and decision to smoke. You are at a greater risk of having a stroke if you:

- Are 55 or older. According to the American Stroke Association, the chance of having a stroke approximately doubles for each decade of life after 55.
- Have a family member who suffered a stroke
- Are a woman
- Have had a stroke
- Have high blood pressure
- Smoke cigarettes
- Have diabetes
- Have heart and/or vascular disease
- Have an increase in your red blood cell count
- Are overweight
- Are not physically active

According to the American Stroke Association, 80 percent of strokes are preventable. Take these simple steps to reduce your risk of suffering a stroke.

- Don't smoke
- Don't abuse alcohol or drugs
- Exercise regularly
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Control your blood pressure and cholesterol levels
- Pay attention to the warning signs of stroke

## **Rehabilitation**

After suffering a stroke, it's important to begin rehabilitation as soon as possible. Rehabilitation helps survivors:

- Regain body functions lost to stroke
- Cope with disabilities and depression caused by stroke
- Learn skills to resume daily routines and re-enter the workforce

Various types of rehabilitation specialists work with stroke survivors:

**Physician** - the primary care physician or neurologist tracks a patient's health and oversees his or her progress in rehabilitation

**Rehabilitation nurse** - the nurse works with the physician to ensure the recovery of function after a stroke

**Physical therapist** - helps the survivor regain functional mobility, such as the ability to walk, and maximize independence

**Speech therapist** - helps the survivor overcome speech or language impairments

**Occupational therapist** - helps the survivor improve cognitive function and maximize independence, allowing him or her to perform everyday functional activities, such as eating and personal grooming

**Psychiatrist** - helps the survivor cope with the depression and disabilities caused by stroke

## Quality of Care Recognized

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The Joint Commission, an independent, not-for-profit accrediting organization, has awarded The Miriam Hospital advanced certification as a Primary Stroke Center.

Certification is based on optimized care: the ability to diagnose and deliver the right treatment for stroke patients. With the right treatment, delivered promptly, at the right hospital, lives can be saved and crippling disabilities reversed.



The Miriam Hospital is one of very few in the country that have received Magnet designation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center

five consecutive times for quality and excellence in nursing care.



The Miriam Hospital received the 2019 Get with the Guidelines Stroke Gold Plus award from The American Heart Association and American Stroke Association, an advanced level of recognition for consistent compliance with quality measures.

## Contact Us

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For more information on The Miriam Hospital's Primary Stroke Center, please call **401-793-5533** or visit **[www.miriamhospital.org](http://www.miriamhospital.org)**.

The American Stroke Association's website, **[www.strokeassociation.org](http://www.strokeassociation.org)**, is another helpful resource.



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164 Summit Avenue  
Providence, RI 02906

[MiriamHospital.org](http://MiriamHospital.org)