

Being overweight increases your chance of high blood pressure, heart disease and diabetes, all of which can increase your chances of stroke. If you are new to physical activity, or have not been active for a while, build up gradually. Always speak to your GP or Practice Nurse about your intentions. They will help to find a suitable activity for you.

**Alcohol** – drinking too much alcohol, in particular binge drinking, can increase blood pressure. Sensible drinking limits are 2 to 3 units a day for a woman and 3 to 4 units for a man. Two days a week should be alcohol-free.

**Smoking** – you are twice as likely to have a stroke if you smoke as it causes your arteries to fur up, and makes a blood clot more likely. Stopping smoking is one of the most important things you can do to reduce your risk of stroke. Quit4You is the Island's free stop-smoking service – find out more on [www.quit4you.gov.im](http://www.quit4you.gov.im)

Visit the following websites to find out more:

[www.manxstrokefoundation.org](http://www.manxstrokefoundation.org)

Manx Stroke Foundation

[www.stroke.org.uk](http://www.stroke.org.uk)

Stroke Association

[www.differentstrokes.co.uk](http://www.differentstrokes.co.uk)

For younger stroke survivors

**The information in this leaflet can be provided in large print or in audio format on request.**



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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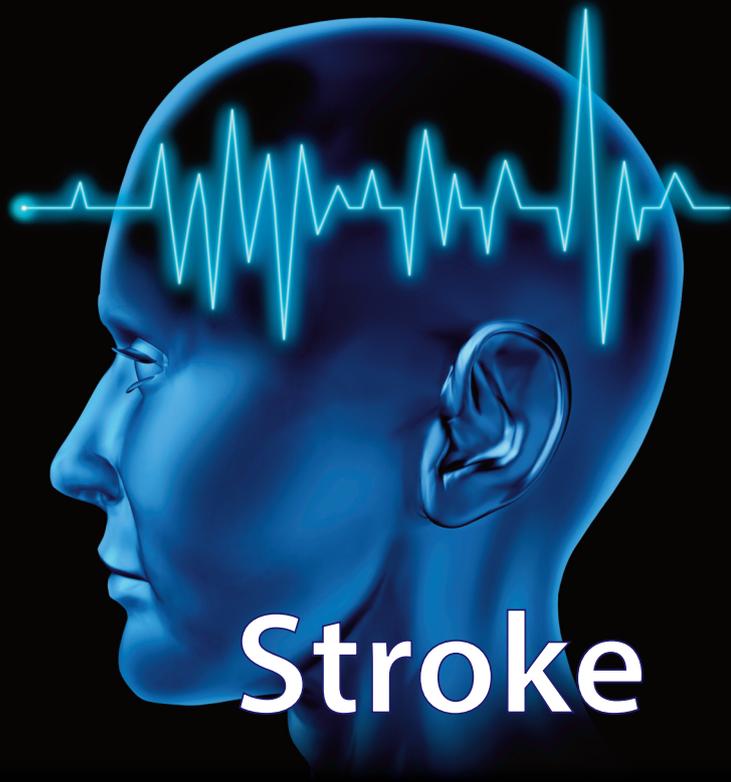
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**Ask Your Pharmacist**



## What is a Stroke?

A stroke happens when the blood supply to part of the brain is cut off, and cells are damaged or die because of the lack of vital nutrients and oxygen.

Strokes are sudden and may have an immediate effect on the body, speech and sight. A person's body may become numb or weak, or paralysis may occur on one side of their body. Their speech may become slurred and they may have difficulty speaking or understanding speech. Some people may have problems with their sight, or may become confused and unsteady.

## A Stroke is always a Medical Emergency

It is important to be able to recognise the symptoms of a stroke to be able to get help as soon as possible. You can use the FAST test to help to recognise a stroke (see image above).

A speedy response can help reduce the damage to a person's brain and improve the chances of recovery. A delay in getting help can result in long-term disabilities or even death.

## What are the After-Effects?

A stroke can damage mind and body, and will affect people in different ways. This will depend on what part of the brain is

affected, how widespread the damage is, and how healthy the person was before the stroke.

Most stroke survivors will have some long-term problems, but about a third of those who have had a stroke will make significant recovery within a month. Sadly, in more severe cases strokes can be fatal or cause long-term disability.

## Preventing Stroke

As is the case with many health issues, a healthy lifestyle can help to combat the risk of stroke; however, some risk factors we are not able to change. Factors that can increase the risk are:

- Your genes
- Your age
- Your diet
- Your alcohol intake
- If you are a smoker
- How fit you are
- Any other medical conditions.

## Healthy Eating – can reduce your risk of having a stroke.

Eating foods that are low in fat or salt can help to reduce your cholesterol levels, which will in turn lower your blood pressure levels. High blood pressure is the biggest risk factor for stroke.

**Exercise** – can also lower your blood pressure, can help your body to handle insulin, and can help to reduce excess weight.