



Owner's Guide

Getting the best out of your body

LEARN
about stroke/TIA*
&
LIVE
a healthier life

*A transient ischemic attack, or TIA, is a precursor to a possible stroke. It produces stroke-like symptoms but no lasting damage. Treating TIAs can reduce your risk of a future stroke.

Boehringer Ingelheim
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Learn to live a healthier life after a stroke/TIA

To live well after having a stroke/TIA, you need to play an active role in your health. What you do to stay healthy is important. By taking an active role in your health and taking care of your body, you will be able to live a healthier life after a stroke/TIA.

You may not know much about strokes/TIAs. You may feel scared and confused, but you are not alone. Strokes can and do happen to people of all ages.

With this booklet, you can learn more about strokes/TIAs and how to reduce your risk of getting them. You will also learn about the stroke/TIA warning signs and what to do when you see them.

Strokes/TIAs are serious conditions, but they are manageable. The key is to learn how to improve your health and lower your risk!

Talk to your healthcare provider about strokes/TIAs and how to lower your risk, including medicines to help reduce the risk of them happening again.

How to reduce your stroke/TIA risk

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This guide will help you learn how strokes and TIAs affect your body and how you can help to reduce the risk of them happening again.

OVERVIEW

What are strokes and TIAs?

Strokes and TIAs are episodes that occur in the brain. Strokes happen

- When the blood supply to the brain is cut off
- When a blood vessel bursts

In both kinds of stroke, brain cells do not receive enough oxygen and blood needed to live. As a result, these brain cells die.

TIAs happen when blood supply to the brain is cut off.

TIAs last for less than 24 hours and do not cause lasting injury to the brain.

**For more information
on strokes and TIAs,
visit www.talkaboutTIA.com**

Fast Fact

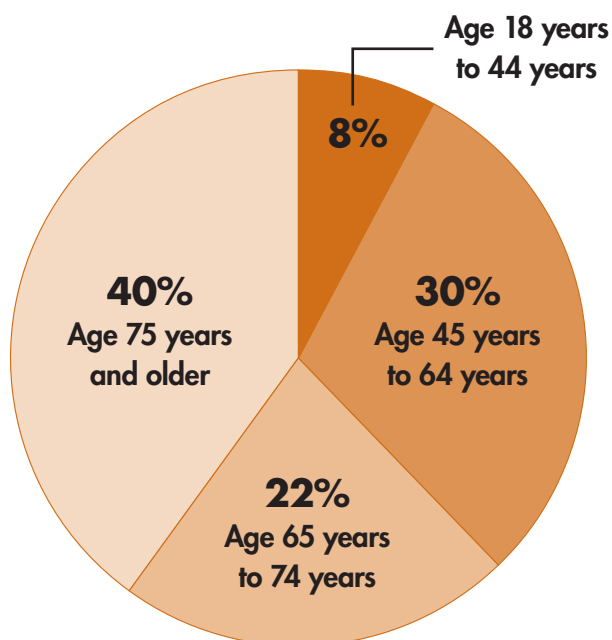
Speak up! Half of all cases of TIA are not reported to healthcare providers.

IMPORTANT NOTES

What are the stroke/TIA facts?

Strokes and TIAs are serious conditions that can affect everyone.

- Strokes are the number 1 cause of adult disability and the third-leading cause of death after heart disease and cancer
- Strokes affect about 795,000 Americans each year
- Both men and women can be at risk for a stroke or TIA. In 2005, women had more strokes (57%) than men (43%)
- More than one third of strokes strike those under age 65



Fast Fact

More than one third of people who have a TIA go on to have a stroke.

SETUP

What are the risk factors for stroke/TIA?

Many things that can increase your stroke risk can't be changed—like your age, race, sex (gender), or family history. But you can make simple changes in your life. Here are some other things you *can* change, treat, or control.

Diseases or conditions

- **High blood pressure (also called hypertension [hi-per-ten-shun])** is the most changeable risk factor for stroke
- **High blood cholesterol (ko-les-ter-ol)** can increase your risk for stroke by clogging the arteries
- People with **diabetes (di-a-beet-ees)** are at a greater risk for stroke. They may also have high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and be overweight
- **Carotid (car-ro-tid) or other artery disease**, when the arteries in the neck that carry blood to the brain become blocked by fatty deposits (plaque) or blood clots
- **Atrial fibrillation (A-fib)**, when the heart does not beat properly, causing the blood to pool and clot. Clots can break off and plug a vessel, which can cause a stroke
- **Sickle cell anemia**, a genetic disorder that mostly affects African American and Hispanic children. The blood cells stick to the walls of the blood vessels. This can cause a blockage and result in a stroke



- **Other heart disease**, such as coronary (cor-on-ar-ee) heart disease, heart failure, enlarged heart, etc

Lifestyle

- The nicotine and carbon monoxide (car-bun mun-ocks-ide) in **cigarette smoke** damage the circulatory system
- **Eating foods high in fat and salt** raises blood cholesterol and blood pressure. It can also make you gain weight
- **Inactivity and being overweight** can raise your risk of high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, heart disease, and stroke
- **Drinking alcohol** can raise your risk

Fast Fact

Kick your smoking habit! The risk for ischemic (ih-skem-ick) stroke is about double that of non-smokers.

MAINTENANCE

What can I do to help reduce my stroke/TIA risk?

Here are some ways you can take care of your body and help reduce your stroke risk.



Stop smoking

If you smoke, quitting is the most important thing you can do. It is a major risk for stroke. Try to stay away from people who smoke. Secondhand smoke is bad, too.



Know your numbers

It is important that you know your blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar numbers and keep them at healthy levels.

- Blood pressure (less than 120/80)
- Cholesterol (under 200)
- Blood sugar (under 100)



Stay at a healthy weight

Being overweight makes your heart work harder. It makes it harder to breathe. Being underweight can make you feel weak and tired. It may make you more likely to get an infection.



Eat healthy foods

Eating foods low in fat and salt can help you fight infections and illnesses.



Get regular exercise

Being active can give you more energy. It can also strengthen your body and reduce your risk for stroke and other diseases.

Talk to your healthcare provider about what you should weigh. Ask him or her to help you make an eating-well plan and exercise plan. Talk with him or her before you start exercising.

TROUBLESHOOTING

What are the warning signs of stroke/TIA?

Serious brain attacks can happen suddenly; there are a few warning signs that you can look out for to act FAST:

F = FACE

Ask the person to smile.
Does one side of the face droop?

A = ARMS

Ask the person to raise both arms.
Does one arm drift downward?

S = SPEECH

Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence.
Does the speech sound slurred or strange?

T = TIME

If you observe any of these warning signs, call 911 or emergency services, and get to the nearest hospital.

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NOTE: You will not be able to tell the difference between strokes and TIAs, so call 911 or emergency services as soon as you see or feel the signs.

Fast Fact

Look out for the signs! In the United States, a stroke happens every 40 seconds.

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU

What should I ask my healthcare provider?

Ask questions when you don't understand something about your care. Write down the answers you get. Be sure to tell your healthcare provider about your symptoms, medicines, lifestyle, and any other health problems. Talk about anything that bothers you.

Here are some questions to get you started:

How do I know if I am having a TIA or a stroke?

I've had a TIA; how can I reduce my stroke risk?

How can I quit smoking now?

What is my blood pressure, and is it in a healthy range?

What is my weight, and is it in a healthy range?

If I am a diabetic, what is my A1_c, and is it in a healthy range?

SERVICE INFORMATION

Where can I get more information?

These organizations can help you learn more about strokes and TIAs.

American Stroke Association

1-888-4STROKE
(1-888-478-7653)

www.strokeassociation.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention

800-CDC-INFO
(800-232-4636)

www.cdc.gov/dhdsp

National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke

A Division of the National Institutes of Health
301-496-5751
www.ninds.nih.gov

National Stroke Association

1-800-STROKES
(1-800-787-6537)

www.stroke.org

Should you have any other stroke/TIA questions, talk to your pharmacist or doctor, and visit www.talkaboutTIA.com

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