

Stroke

Understanding the signs—and acting quickly can make all the difference

What is a Stroke?

A stroke happens when the **blood supply to part of the brain is suddenly interrupted**.

Your brain needs a constant flow of blood to get oxygen and nutrients. When this flow is blocked or a blood vessel bursts, the brain cells in that area do not get what they need—and they begin to stop working.

👉 In simple terms:

A stroke is when part of the brain is injured because blood flow is disrupted.

Types of Stroke

There are two main types:

1. Ischemic Stroke (Blocked Blood Flow)

This is the more common type.

- A blood clot blocks a blood vessel
- Blood cannot reach part of the brain

👉 Think of it like a “blocked pipe.”

2. Hemorrhagic Stroke (Bleeding in the Brain)

This occurs when a blood vessel ruptures.

- Blood leaks into or around the brain
- Pressure builds up and damages brain tissue

👉 Think of it like a “burst pipe.”

Both types are serious and need urgent attention.

Why is Stroke So Important?

The brain controls everything:

- Movement
- Speech
- Memory
- Thinking
- Vision

👉 When a stroke happens, these functions can be affected.

The impact depends on:

- Which part of the brain is involved
- How quickly treatment is given

👉 A key message:

Stroke is a medical emergency—but early treatment can greatly improve recovery.

Symptoms to Watch For

Stroke symptoms usually come on **suddenly**.

Recognising them early is critical.

The FAST Warning Signs 🇨🇷

This is a simple way to remember the main symptoms:

F – Face

- One side of the face droops
- Smile looks uneven

A – Arm

- Weakness or numbness in one arm
- Difficulty lifting or holding the arm

S – Speech

- Slurred speech
- Difficulty speaking or understanding

T – Time

- Time to act immediately

👉 If you notice any of these, **seek emergency care immediately**.

Other Symptoms to Be Aware Of

Stroke symptoms are not always limited to FAST signs.

You may also notice:

- Sudden weakness in the leg
- Numbness on one side of the body
- Sudden vision problems
- Blurred or double vision
- Sudden dizziness or loss of balance
- Difficulty walking
- Sudden severe headache

👉 Patients often describe:

“Everything changed suddenly.”

Severe Warning Signs 🚨

Seek urgent help if you or someone nearby experiences:

- Sudden collapse
- Loss of consciousness
- Seizures
- Severe headache with vomiting
- Confusion or disorientation

👉 These symptoms require immediate medical attention.

When Should You See a Neurosurgeon?

A stroke is an emergency—initial treatment is done in the hospital.

However, a neurosurgeon becomes involved in specific situations, such as:

- Bleeding in the brain
- Large strokes causing swelling
- Conditions requiring surgery
- Evaluation after a stroke for further treatment
- Preventing future strokes

You should see a neurosurgeon if:

- You have had a stroke and need further evaluation
- You have been advised about possible surgical treatment
- You have ongoing symptoms or complications
- You want a second opinion about your condition

👉 A key point:

Stroke care does not end after the emergency—it continues with proper evaluation and recovery planning.

What Happens During a Stroke?

Understanding this can help reduce fear.

When blood flow is disrupted:

- Brain cells stop working properly
- Signals between the brain and body are affected
- This leads to symptoms like weakness or speech problems

👉 The longer the brain goes without proper blood flow, the more damage can occur.

That is why **time is critical**.

How is Stroke Treated?

Treatment depends on:

- The type of stroke
- How quickly the patient arrives at the hospital
- The severity of the condition

1. Emergency Treatment

The first step is **urgent hospital care**.

Doctors will:

- Perform brain scans
- Identify the type of stroke
- Start immediate treatment

For Ischemic Stroke (Blocked Vessel)

Treatment aims to:

- Restore blood flow
- Remove or dissolve the clot

This may involve:

- Medication to break down clots
- Procedures to remove the clot directly

For Hemorrhagic Stroke (Bleeding)

Treatment focuses on:

- Controlling bleeding
- Reducing pressure in the brain
- Stabilising the patient

2. Surgical Treatment (When Needed)

A neurosurgeon may be involved if:

- There is significant bleeding
- There is swelling in the brain
- There is pressure affecting brain function
- There are structural problems like aneurysms

Surgical Options May Include:

- Removing blood clots
- Relieving pressure in the brain
- Repairing blood vessels
- Treating aneurysms or vascular abnormalities

👉 Surgery is carefully considered and recommended only when necessary.

3. Recovery and Rehabilitation

After the initial treatment, recovery is an important phase.

This may involve:

- Physiotherapy (to improve movement)
- Speech therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Ongoing medical care

👉 Recovery is gradual, and many patients improve with time and support.

Frequently Asked Questions

“Can stroke be treated?”

Yes. Early treatment can reduce damage and improve recovery.

“Will I recover fully?”

Recovery varies, but many patients regain function with proper care and rehabilitation.

“Can stroke happen again?”

It can, which is why follow-up care and prevention are important.

“Is surgery always needed?”

No. Many strokes are treated without surgery, but some require neurosurgical care.

Why Choose a Specialist?

Stroke care can be complex, especially when the brain is involved.

Choosing the right specialist ensures:

- Accurate diagnosis
- Appropriate treatment decisions
- Access to surgical care if needed
- Long-term management and prevention

As a **Consultant Neurosurgeon**, I manage conditions involving the brain, including:

- Brain hemorrhage
- Vascular conditions
- Surgical complications of stroke
- Post-stroke evaluation and care

My approach is:

- ✓ Clear explanation in simple language
- ✓ Careful review of scans and condition
- ✓ Individualised treatment planning
- ✓ Use of modern surgical techniques when required
- ✓ Support throughout recovery

👉 Most importantly:

You and your family are guided every step of the way.

A Reassuring Thought

A stroke can be a frightening experience—for both patients and families.

But it is important to remember:

- 👉 Stroke is treatable
- 👉 Early action can make a major difference
- 👉 Many patients improve with proper care
- 👉 You are not alone—support and treatment are available

Take the First Step Toward Recovery

If you or a loved one has experienced:

- Sudden weakness
- Speech difficulty
- Vision problems
- A diagnosed stroke

👉 It is important to continue care and follow-up.

A consultation can help you understand:

- What happened
- What to expect next
- How to prevent future problems

Book Your Consultation

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- 👉 Don't ignore warning signs
- 👉 Early treatment saves brain function
- 👉 The right care supports recovery and prevention

Take the first step today—your brain health matters.