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# BE FAST Stroke Education for RNs and Physicians/Practitioners

Providence Alaska Medical Center  
Advanced Primary Stroke Center

Diane Lada, MSN, RN, ACNP, SCRNP  
Stroke Program Coordinator  
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# Stroke Facts

Stroke is the **#5** cause of death  
in the United States



Each year, about **795,000** Americans suffer  
a new or recurrent stroke

# Stroke Facts

**37%** of all Americans cannot accurately identify even one stroke warning sign





**Being ready for a stroke can save a life.  
Possibly YOURS.**

# What is a Stroke

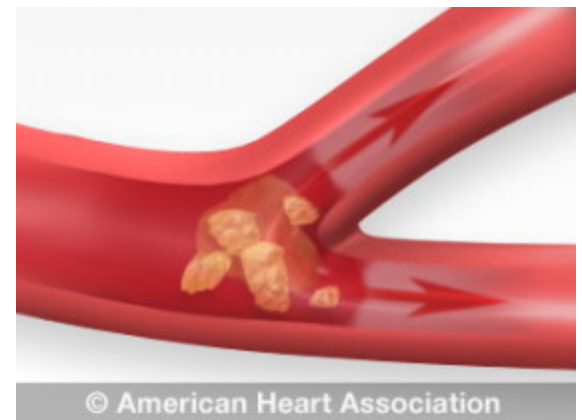
- Stroke is a disease that affects the arteries leading to, and within, the brain
- A stroke occurs when a blood vessel carrying oxygen and nutrients to the brain is either blocked by a clot or bursts (ruptures)
- When that happens, the brain cannot get the blood and oxygen it needs, so the affected brain cells die



# About Stroke

- **87%** of strokes are ischemic (a blockage)
- **13%** of strokes are hemorrhagic (a bleed)
- Sometimes a TIA (Transient Ischemic Attack) occurs, also known as a “warning stroke” or a “mini-stroke”, which produces stroke-like symptoms.

In Providence call **PEAT 88-7328**  
Outside of the hospital call **9-1-1**



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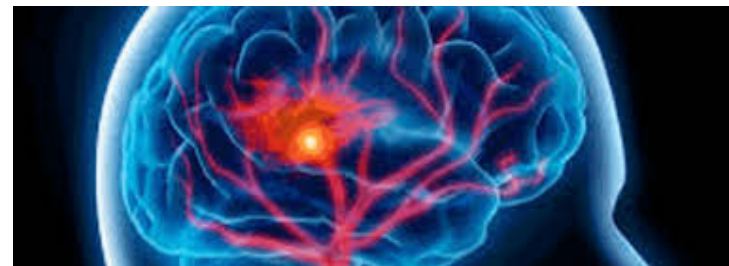
# Stroke Risk Factors

- High blood pressure
- Atrial fibrillation, Congestive Heart Failure
- High cholesterol
- Diabetes (twice the risk)
- Smoking (50% higher risk)
- Alcohol or Drug Abuse
- Inactivity or Obesity
- Clotting problems (oral contraceptive pills, Sickle Cell)



# Stroke Risk Factors- continued

- Prior stroke history
- Heredity (family history)
- Age (risk increases with age)
- Gender
  - ✓ stroke happens more commonly in men
  - ✓ More women who have strokes will die from them
- Race (greater risk among African Americans)





# **BE FAST** is Another Way to Remember Stroke Symptoms



CALL **PEAT 88-7328** AS SOON AS SYMPTOMS BEGIN  
CALL **911** OUTSIDE OF THE HOSPITAL

# Other Symptoms

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the leg
- Sudden confusion
- Sudden visual difficulty in one or both eyes
- Sudden difficulty walking, dizziness, or loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden severe headache with no discernible cause



# What to do if you think someone is having a stroke

- In the hospital, call **PEAT** at **88-7328**
- Outside the hospital, call **9-1-1**
- **PEAT** will assess the patient and call the physician to determine if a **“Stroke Alert”** should be activated
- **Note what time the patient was last known to be well or at baseline** – the time is important to determine treatment

# Why immediate action is critical

- The faster a stroke victim is assessed, the sooner they'll receive potentially life-saving treatment
- Diagnostic imaging will determine if a stroke is present and if a clot-busting drug called **t-PA (tissue plasminogen activator)** or mechanical clot retrieval is indicated
- Visit the PAMC Stroke page on the clinical toolbox - <http://in.providence.org/ak/facilities/anchorage/pamc/resources/nursingresources/Pages/Stroke.aspx>
- Or learn more at <http://stroke.nih.gov/about/index.htm>

For more information, call Diane Lada RN  
Stroke Program Coordinator  
907-212-3739

