

What is a stroke?

A stroke, sometimes called a "brain attack," occurs when blood flow to the brain is interrupted. When a stroke occurs, brain cells in the immediate area begin to die because they stop getting the oxygen and nutrients they need to function.

What causes a stroke?

There are two major kinds of stroke.

The first, called an **ischemic stroke**, is caused by a blood clot that blocks or plugs a blood vessel or artery in the brain. About 80 percent of all strokes are ischemic. The second, known as a **hemorrhagic stroke**, is caused by a blood vessel in the brain that breaks and bleeds into the brain. About 20 percent of strokes are hemorrhagic.

Stroke occurs in all age groups, in both sexes, and in all races in every country. The best way to prevent a stroke from happening is to lower your risk factors. Learn more about stroke risks, symptoms and treatment at MyHealth@Anthem powered by WebMD – www.anthem.com.

Sources:

National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke -
<http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/stroke/stroke.htm>

American Stroke Association -
<http://www.strokeassociation.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3030400>