



# Detroit Medical Center Stroke Information

## What is a Stroke?

Stroke, also called brain attack, occurs when blood flow to the brain is disrupted. Disruption in blood flow is caused when either a blood clot or piece of plaque blocks one of the vital blood vessels in the brain (ischemic stroke), or when a blood vessel in the brain bursts, spilling blood into surrounding tissues (hemorrhagic stroke).

The brain needs a constant supply of oxygen and nutrients in order to function. Even a brief interruption in blood supply can cause problems. Brain cells begin to die after just a few minutes without blood or oxygen. The area of dead cells in tissues is called an infarct. Due to both the physical and chemical changes that occur in the brain with stroke, damage can continue to occur for several days. This is called a stroke-in-evolution.

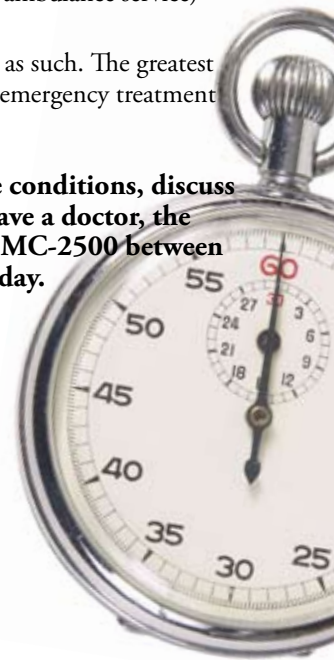
A loss of brain function occurs with brain cell death. This may include impaired ability with movement, speech, thinking and memory, bowel and bladder, eating, emotional control, and other vital body functions. Recovery from stroke and the specific ability affected depends on the size and location of the stroke. A small stroke may result in only minor problems such as weakness in an arm or leg. Larger strokes may cause paralysis (inability to move part of the body), loss of speech, or even death.

According to the National Stroke Association (NSA), the most important steps in Stroke care are:

- Reduce the risk
- Recognize the symptoms
- Respond by calling 911 (or your local ambulance service)

Stroke is an emergency and should be treated as such. The greatest chance for recovery from stroke occurs when emergency treatment is started immediately.

**If you are concerned about any of these conditions, discuss them with your doctor. If you do not have a doctor, the DMC can find one for you. Call 888-DMC-2500 between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday – Friday.**



Each year, cardiovascular diseases top the list of the country's most serious health problems – including stroke. This information will help you learn more about strokes, including symptoms, risk factors, diagnosis, and treatment. The DMC is home to the state's leading experts in heart disease, including the physicians of **CARDIO TEAM ONE**, and the 29-minute Emergency Room Guarantee.