



## **STROKE is a medical emergency**

Every 40 seconds someone has a stroke — and if a stroke doesn't kill, it can leave you physically or mentally disabled. Stroke is a medical emergency where minutes matter. Time lost is brain lost.

**Call 9-1-1 immediately** if you think you or someone you're with is having a stroke. Calling 9-1-1 is almost always the fastest way to get lifesaving treatment. If you recognize a stroke and get to the hospital immediately, the clot-dissolving drug tPA can reduce disability if it is given within three hours after an ischemic stroke starts. (Ischemic strokes are caused by clots and are the most common type of stroke.)

### **Know the warning signs of stroke:**

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause

**Stroke can happen to anyone**, at any time and at any age but people with high blood pressure (140/90 mm/dl or higher) have about twice the risk of stroke as people with blood pressure under 120/80 mm/dl). Smoking doubles the risk of stroke as it damages blood vessel walls, speeds up artery clogging, raises blood pressure and makes the heart work harder. Strokes are closely associated with exposure to secondhand smoke.

**Learn your risk factors**, including family history and take steps to reduce your risk at [www.StrokeAssociation.org](http://www.StrokeAssociation.org)

*- Information provided by the American Heart Association*