

## What is it?

A stroke happens when there is an interruption of blood flow to your brain. There are 2 different types of stroke:

- **Ischemic:** a lack of blood flow due to a clot or plaque, or a change in blood pressure.
- **Hemorrhagic:** when blood vessels rupture and bleed into brain tissue.

Based on the type of stroke and your risk factors, your neurologist can help you create a plan to reduce your chance of having another stroke.



### Stroke Prevention Clinic

Saskatoon:

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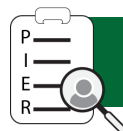
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#### For More Information

Heart & Stroke Foundation. (2023). *What is Stroke?* <https://www.heartandstroke.ca/stroke/what-is-stroke>

Mayo Clinic. (2023, July 8). *Stroke*. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/stroke/symptoms-causes/syc-20350113>



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Healthy People, Healthy Saskatchewan



# Stroke

## Stroke Prevention Clinic



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## Three types of stroke

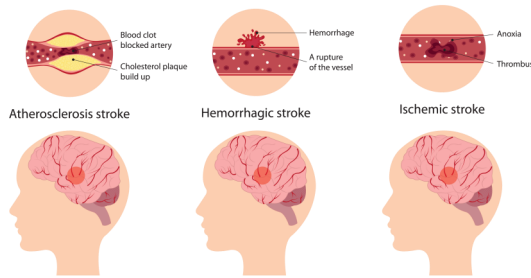


Image provided from SHA Creative Services. Three Types of Stroke. AdobeStock; [cited 2024 APR 15]. Available from: [https://stock.adobe.com/images/three-types-of-stroke-atherosclerosis-hemorrhagic-and-ischemic-stroke/565737488?prev\\_url=detail&asset\\_id=565737488](https://stock.adobe.com/images/three-types-of-stroke-atherosclerosis-hemorrhagic-and-ischemic-stroke/565737488?prev_url=detail&asset_id=565737488)

## Symptoms

Symptoms of stroke vary due to what area of the brain is affected. Some symptoms include:

- facial droop
- slurred speech, jumbled words
- weakness on one side of the body
- numbness to one side of the body
- vision changes
- coordination changes, nausea and vertigo

## Diagnosis

Your neurologist diagnoses your stroke based on your symptoms, neurological exam and a CT/CTA scan of your brain.

*The Saskatchewan Health Authority works in the spirit of truth and reconciliation, acknowledging Saskatchewan as the traditional territory of First Nations and Métis People.*

## Causes

Based on your stroke risk factors and additional testing, your neurologist determines the cause of your stroke. Below are the common causes of ischemic stroke:

- **Atrial fibrillation:** an irregular heart rhythm that can cause clots to form that go up to the brain.
- **Carotid stenosis:** when plaque builds up in your arteries, a piece can break off and a clot can form in that area.

The most common cause of a hemorrhagic stroke is often due to unmanaged high blood pressure as it weakens the vessels.

## Investigations

- **CT/CTA:** looks at the vessels in your brain by injecting a dye
- **MRI/MRA:** more detailed brain scan
- **Carotid Ultrasound:** assesses blood flow in your neck vessels and plaque
- **Echocardiogram:** an ultrasound to assess structure and function of the heart and its valves
- **Holter:** continuous heart monitor you wear at home to look for atrial fibrillation
- **Bloodwork:** check hemoglobin A1C (average blood sugar), cholesterol levels or for clotting disorders

## Treatment

Even before the cause of stroke has been determined, you will be started on Aspirin® 81 mg once a day, and possibly Plavix® once a day for 21 days.

Once the cause has been determined, you will get a more tailored plan for stroke prevention. This may include taking an oral anticoagulant if it is discovered you have atrial fibrillation or a medication for your cholesterol.

Modifiable risk factors will also be determined by your neurologist. These are things that you have the power to change in order to greatly reduce your chance of stroke:

- diabetes management
- blood pressure management
- lowering cholesterol
- reducing stress
- exercise
- diet
- stop smoking, if you smoke
- weight management

**If at any time you are concerned about your symptoms, or they are unusual for you, please seek medical attention.**