



National Stroke Awareness Month is an annual event held within the United States. The aim of National Stroke Awareness Month is to make Americans aware that they may be able to '**Save A Life**' of a person experiencing a stroke.

What is a Stroke?

- A stroke is a "brain attack" that happens when blood flow to the brain is cut off and brain cells are deprived of oxygen and begin to die.
- When stroke occurs, abilities controlled by that area of the brain, such as memory and muscle control, are lost.

The National Stroke Awareness Month is run by the [National Stroke Association](http://www.stroke.org) who help individuals '**Save A Life**' by educating them about:

- stroke risk factors
- stroke symptoms
- stroke preventative measures

National Stroke Awareness Month is also a timely reminder of stroke survivors and how organizations such as the [National Stroke Association](http://www.stroke.org) supports stroke survivors through their lifelong journey of recovery.

The National Stroke Awareness Month program places emphasis on making the public aware about **Acting FAST**.

According to the [National Stroke Association](http://www.stroke.org), a person experiencing a stroke can be treated if people have acted FAST - 80% of strokes can also be prevented.

FAST being an acronym for things to check in a suspected stroke victim:

- **F - Face** / Does the face droop on one side when the person smiles?
- **A - Arm** / After raising both arms, does one of the arms drift downwards?
- **S - Speech** /After repeating a simple phrase, does the persons speech sound slurred or strange?
- **T - Time** / If any or all of the above are observed call for 9-1-1 (if in US or 999 in UK) and ask for medical assistance.

Stroke Prevention

- Know your blood pressure. Have it checked at least annually. If it is elevated, work with your healthcare professional to control it.
- Find out if you have atrial fibrillation

(AFib) – a type of irregular heartbeat. If you have it, work with your healthcare professional to manage it.

- If you smoke, stop.
- If you drink alcohol, do so in moderation.
- Know your cholesterol numbers. If it is high, work with your doctor to control it.
- If you are diabetic, follow your doctor's recommendations carefully.
- Include exercise in your daily routine.
- Enjoy a lower sodium (salt) and lower fat diet.
- If you have circulation problems, work with your healthcare professional to improve your circulation.

Stroke is an EMERGENCY!

- Know the signs of stroke
- Time is critical – call 9-1-1 immediately