



Spot A Stroke F.A.S.T.

#EmPOWERChange

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Kick off your program with a warm welcome and your opening remarks. This could include an inspiring quote or reading or share with the group why this topic is important to you and your reason for offering to host this lesson.

SPOT A STROKE F.A.S.T. | Lesson Overview

Welcome

- What is EmPOWERED to Serve™?
- Program Topic and Urgent Community Need

Health Lesson:

Spot A Stroke F.A.S.T.

- Learn the F.A.S.T. Warning Signs
- Don't Wait to Call 911
- Time Lost is Brain Lost

Closing Thoughts

- Create a Culture of Health
- Online Resources

SPOT A STROKE™
F.A.S.T.

Get everyone focused by reading through the lesson overview.

Let participants know that the lesson takes 30 minutes to complete.

WHAT IS EMPOWERED TO SERVE?

EmPOWERED to Serve is a movement inspiring those who are passionate about driving change through health justice in their communities.

We are catalysts for change, empowering the equity equation.

Learn More at [EmPOWEREDtoServe.org](https://www.EmPOWEREDtoServe.org).

AHA's Mission Statement:
To be a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives.

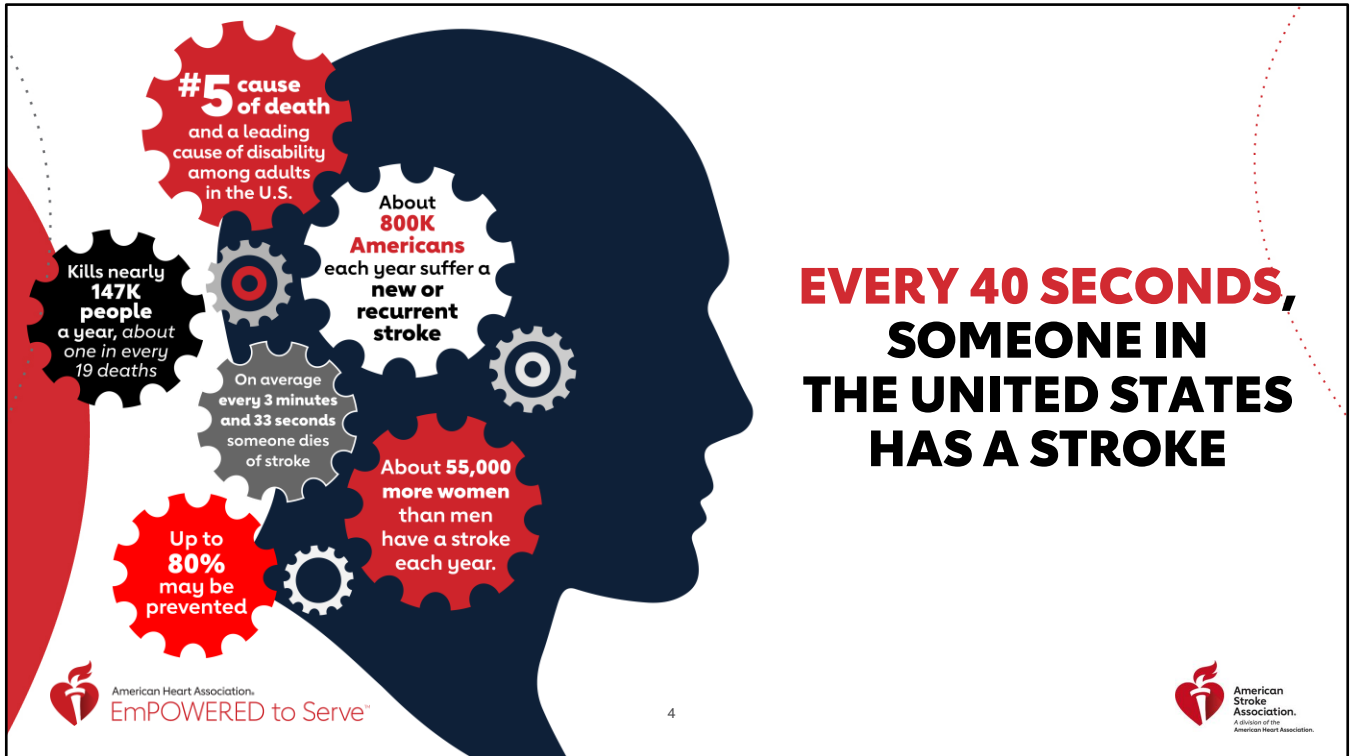


Read the introduction to ETS.

Share why you joined the ETS movement.

Encourage anyone who has not joined ETS to go online after the program and sign up for this national movement.

Note that ETS is a platform of the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association and works in partnership with community organizations across the country.



Ask the group: Do you know anyone who has had a stroke?

Review the information on the slide.

SOME POPULATIONS ARE AT HIGHER RISK

- **Black Americans** are at greater risk for stroke than any other race, having high rates of obesity and diabetes, which contribute to cardiovascular disease.
- **Hispanics/Latinos** have some of the highest rates of high blood pressure, diabetes and obesity, all risk factors for stroke.
- Stroke is the seventh leading cause of death among **American Indians** and **Alaska Natives**.



Review the information on the slide.

Note that at the end of the lesson, the group will discuss steps to help reduce the risk of stroke.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

After the lesson, you will be able to talk F.A.S.T. and share lifesaving information with your loved ones, including:

- Steps to reduce your risk of stroke
- Warning Signs of Stroke:
 - **F**ace Drooping
 - **A**rm Weakness
 - **S**peech Difficulty
 - **T**ime to call 911
- What to do if you think you or a loved one is having a stroke
- The need to call 911 immediately to get emergency help



Review the program objectives.

Explain the importance of today's lesson:

- You need to know the warning signs of stroke so you can get help immediately, either for yourself or someone close to you.
- Getting help immediately can save lives.
- Symptoms of stroke come on F.A.S.T. so you must act fast.

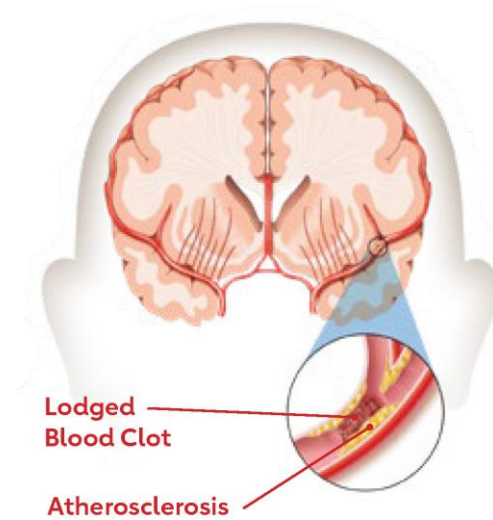
Ask the group: Does anyone know what causes a stroke?

WHAT IS A STROKE?

A stroke happens when there's an interruption of the blood flow to the brain.

About nine out of every 10 strokes (87%) are caused by a blockage. A stroke caused by a blocked artery is called an ischemic stroke.

When the part of the brain that's affected by the blocked artery can't get enough blood and oxygen, the brain cells in that part of the brain die, causing a stroke.



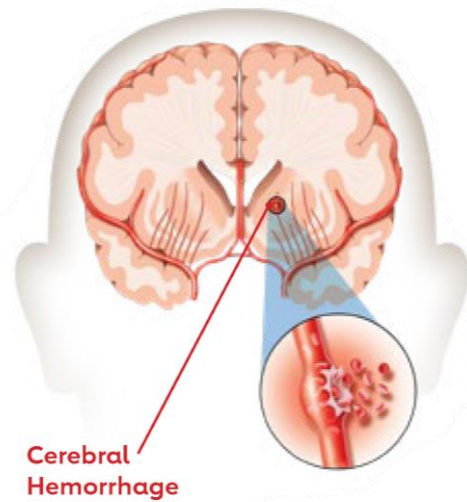
Review the information on the slide.

WHAT IS A STROKE?

When a blood vessel (artery) carrying blood and oxygen (nutrients) to the brain bursts, this type of stroke is called a **hemorrhagic stroke**. Hemorrhagic strokes are less common than ischemic strokes.

A **TIA (Transient Ischemic Attack)** is often called a mini stroke, but it's a major warning. A TIA is a temporary blockage of blood flow to the brain. A TIA may signal a full-blown stroke ahead.

If you suspect you've had or are having a TIA, don't ignore it! Call 911. Get immediate medical attention, even if the symptoms go away.



Review the information on the slide.

Reference the handout "Let's Talk About Stroke, TIA and Warning Signs" infographic. If time allows, ask for volunteers to take turns reading sections of the infographic.

STROKE IS PREVENTABLE



4 OUT OF 5 STROKES CAN BE PREVENTED
with healthy lifestyle changes and by working with your health care
provider to control conditions that raise your risk for stroke

To learn more or to get involved,
call 1-888-4STROKE (1-888-478-7653) or visit [stroke.org](https://www.stroke.org).

Review the information on the slide.

AM I AT RISK?

55+

Age

The chance of having a stroke doubles for each decade of life after age 55.



Heredity (Family History)

Your risk is almost twice as high if a parent, sister or brother has had a stroke.



Race

Black Americans have a much greater risk of death from stroke.



Sex

Women have more strokes than men. Stroke kills more women than men.



Prior Stroke, TIA or Heart Attack

If you've already had a stroke, your risk increases.

Ask for five volunteers to read the risk factors.

Note that there are steps you can take to reduce your risk for stroke. Add that by calling 911 at the first sign of a stroke, you can help yourself or your loved one to get treatment as soon as possible.

POINT 1: Embrace Life's Simple 7®

Embrace Life's Simple 7® to Reduce Your Risk for Stroke Seven Small Steps to Big Changes

1. Get Active.

Try to get 150 minutes of moderate aerobic exercise or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise (or a combination of both), preferably spread throughout the week.

2. Eat Better.

Enjoy a variety of fruits and vegetables, choose whole grains, low-fat dairy products, skinless poultry and fish and nuts and legumes. Use nontropical vegetable oils. Limit saturated and trans fats, sodium, red meats, sweets and sugar-sweetened beverages.



Ask the group: Have you heard of Life's Simple 7?

Do you try to live by Life's Simple 7?

Explain that by embracing Life's Simple 7, you're helping to prevent a stroke. Note that the top three lifestyle changes you can make to reduce stroke risk are to stop smoking, manage blood pressure and control cholesterol.

Review each of the principles of Life's Simple 7.

Note that in addition to these, it's important to have regular checkups and take any medicines as prescribed.

POINT 1: EMBRACE LIFE'S SIMPLE 7® (continued)

4. **Lose Weight** and keep your weight under control.
5. **Stop Smoking.**
Don't smoke, vape or use tobacco or nicotine products and avoid secondhand smoke or vapor.
6. **Control Cholesterol** and treat high cholesterol if you have it.
7. **Manage Blood Pressure** and treat high blood pressure if you have it.
8. **Reduce Blood Sugar** and control your blood sugar if you have diabetes.

Plus, have regular checkups and take any medications as prescribed.



Ask the group: Have you heard of Life's Simple 7?

Do you try to live by Life's Simple 7?

Explain that by embracing Life's Simple 7, you're helping to prevent a stroke. Note that the top three lifestyle changes you can make to reduce stroke risk are to stop smoking, manage blood pressure and control cholesterol.

Review each of the principles of Life's Simple 7.

Note that in addition to these, it's important to have regular checkups and take any medicines as prescribed. Note the link between Blood Pressure and Stroke. Reference the handout "High Blood Pressure Increases Risk of Stroke infographic."

F.A.S.T. WARNING SIGNS



Face Drooping

Does one side of the face droop or is it numb? Ask the person to smile. Is the person's smile uneven?



Speech Difficulty:

Is speech slurred? Is the person unable to speak or hard to understand? Ask the person to repeat a sentence, like "The sky is blue." Is the sentence repeated correctly?



Arm Weakness:

Is one arm weak or numb? Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?



Time to Call 911:

If someone shows any of these symptoms, even if the symptoms go away, call 911 and get the person to the hospital immediately. Check the time, so you'll know when the first symptoms appeared.

Ask four volunteers to read the four warning signs of stroke.

Engage the group: Let's do a shout-out. The warning signs of a stroke are F.A.S.T.

F is for

A is for

S is for

T is for

If someone has the F.A.S.T. warning signs, what should you do?

Reference the handout "F.A.S.T." infographic. If time allows, ask for volunteers to take turns reading sections of the infographic.

POINT 2: Learn the F.A.S.T. Warning Signs

Learn the Warning Signs of a Stroke F.A.S.T.: Face. Arm. Speech. Time.

- F.A.S.T. is an easy way to remember the sudden signs of a stroke.
- When you can spot the signs, **call 911 for help right away**. Check the time so you'll know when the symptoms first appeared.



Review the information on the slide.

Note that stroke symptoms usually come on suddenly. In other words, they appear F.A.S.T.

OTHER SYMPTOMS



**If someone shows any of these symptoms,
call 911 or emergency medical services.**

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

Review the information on the slide.

Ask the group: What's the first word for each of the Other Symptoms in the bulleted list? It's "Sudden." (The symptoms come on suddenly, as in F.A.S.T.)

If you notice someone has these symptoms, what should you do? (Call 911 FAST.)

VIDEO: SPOT A STROKE F.A.S.T.



PREP NOTE: Before the program, review the resource list for this lesson. Check the URL for the "Treat Stroke F.A.S.T." video. If you aren't going to have a live internet connection, download the YouTube video ahead of time to your computer. Or, skip this slide.

Play the video: <https://youtu.be/z6N3fHJch20>

POINT 3: Think You're Having a Stroke? Call 911.

Stroke is an EMERGENCY.
Early treatment leads to higher survival rates and lower disability rates.

- Call 911
- Guidelines recommend that you are transported to the nearest hospital that can deliver the necessary treatment
- Don't drive yourself or ask family members or friends to drive you
- Don't misinterpret your symptoms

On average, **1.9 million brain cells die every minute** that a stroke goes untreated. Getting medical attention by calling 911 is critical.



Ask the group: Has anyone had to call 911 for emergency care? What do you recall about the experience?

Review the information on the slide.

Reinforce the message that if you or someone else has the F.A.S.T. warning signs or other signs of a stroke, call 911 immediately.

TAKE THESE STEPS TODAY

Before there's an emergency:

- Find out which hospitals in your area have 24-hour emergency stroke care.
- Keep a list of emergency phone numbers next to your phone and with you at all times, just in case.
- Print information about the warning signs of stroke:
www.stroke.org/WarningSigns



Review the information on the slide.

Emphasize the importance of making time to do these things. Say: It could save a life, possibly yours.

CALL TO ACTION

- Embrace **Life's Simple 7** to Reduce Your Risk of Stroke
- Learn the **F.A.S.T.** Warning Signs of Stroke
- Think You're Having A Stroke?
Call 911 – Don't Wait...
Time Lost is Brain Lost

Share what you've learned with five friends:
Tell them about F.A.S.T. and calling 911 immediately.



Review the call to action on the slide.

Ask the group: What are the warning signs of a stroke?

How long should you wait before calling 911?

YOUR VOICE MATTERS

We all have the power to make a difference by speaking out for policies that help build healthier communities and healthier lives.

Join **You're the Cure** today and be among the first to know when major policy initiatives pass or when your help is needed to advocate for a healthy future.

Text **EMPOWER** to **46839** to join today!



Say:

Thank you for joining today. Before we close this lesson, we would like to mention other ways you can continue your health journey and help others in your community.

Each of us have the power to make a difference in our community. By joining the American Heart Association's **You're the Cure** program, you can be among the first to know when major policy initiatives pass or when your help is needed to advocate for an issue. Text **EMPOWER** to **46839** to join today!

USE YOUR VOICE TO CREATE HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES

You can help us work to draw communities together on the path to building a sustainable culture of health.

Go to [EmPOWEREDtoServe.org](https://www.EmPOWEREDtoServe.org)

Sign up to become an ambassador and learn how you can be a part of the movement!

Join us as we impact the health of ALL in our communities!



Encourage everyone to be active in the EmPOWERED to Serve movement.

Share how being part of the ETS movement helps you embrace a lifestyle of health.

Encourage everyone to come to a future ETS health lesson.

WRAP-UP

We appreciate your thoughts!

Tell us what you liked best.

Email us at:
empoweredtoserve@heart.org



Thank everyone for coming.

Thank all the volunteers who helped coordinate the program.

Take a moment to share an inspirational reading or ask the group to join you in an uplifting song.

WE ARE EMPOWERED TO SERVE

...serve our health, serve our community



The American Heart Association requests that this document be cited as follows:
American Heart Association EmPOWERED to Serve Health Lessons. [EmPOWEREDtoServe.org](https://www.EmPOWEREDtoServe.org)

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Put this slide up as your closing slide and leave it up until all the participants leave the room.