



Spot A Stroke F.A.S.T.

LESSON PLAN

Call to Action

Embrace Life’s Simple 7® to reduce your risk for stroke. Learn the F.A.S.T. warning signs of stroke. Call 911 if you think you’re having a stroke. Don’t wait. Time Lost is Brain Lost.

Community Need

Stroke is the No. 5 cause of death in the U.S.:

- About 800,000 Americans each year suffer a new or recurrent stroke.
- Stroke kills nearly 148,000 Americans each year — that’s 1 of every 19 deaths.
- On average in 2016, someone died of a stroke every 3 minutes 33 seconds.
- Black Americans are at greater risk for stroke than any other race.

F.A.S.T.

Face Drooping	Arm Weakness	Speech Difficulty	Time to Call 911
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Stroke affects the arteries leading to and within the brain. It occurs when a blood vessel that carries oxygen and nutrients to the brain is either blocked by a clot or ruptures. When that happens, part of the brain can’t get the blood (and oxygen) it needs. The brain cells die.

Black Americans are at higher risk — nearly 44% of men and 48% of women have some form of cardiovascular disease that includes heart disease and stroke. Hispanics/Latinos have some of the highest rates of high blood pressure, diabetes and obesity, all risk factors for stroke. And, stroke is a common cause of death among American Indians and Alaska Natives.

F.A.S.T. is an easy way to remember the sudden signs of stroke. When you can spot the signs, you’ll know that you need to call 911 immediately. **F.A.S.T.** is:

- **F**ace Drooping.
- **A**rm Weakness.
- **S**peech Difficulty.
- **T**ime to call 911.

If you’re having a stroke, it’s critical that you get medical attention immediately. Immediate treatment may minimize the long-term effects of a stroke and may even prevent death.



“Spot A Stroke F.A.S.T.” helps your community members learn about stroke, the warning signs and how to act F.A.S.T. when someone is having a stroke. The lesson also reviews steps to help prevent stroke.

Three Important Points

Our lives are busy and many of us are on information overload. That’s why we focus on three key health messages:

- Embrace Life’s Simple 7® to reduce your risk for stroke.
- Learn the warning signs of a stroke **F.A.S.T.** (**F**ace. **A**rm. **S**peech. **T**ime.)
- Think you’re having a stroke? Call 911 immediately. The sooner you get medical help, the better the outcome.

Length of Lesson

- Budget at least 30 minutes to present the lesson.
- If you are conducting a health screening, add 20 minutes or more before the meeting for participants to get their blood pressure and weight checked.
- Review the speaker notes prior to the lesson to be familiar with the information and know what additional resources are used.
- View the YouTube videos featured in the lesson at <https://youtu.be/z6N3fHJch20>.
- If handouts are referenced in the presentation, we recommend distributing the pages prior to beginning the lesson.
- Additional resources are available on the Resources List pdf. These could be added to lengthen the presentation or provide ideas for small group discussion. You may also provide the Resources List pdf to the attendees so they have links to information discussed in the lesson.



Lesson Materials

No Access to a Slide Projector? Print out the slides and put them in a three-ring binder. Use the printed slides as a script to deliver your health lesson.

- Flip chart and markers.
- Handouts (one copy per participant):
 - F.A.S.T. Infographic <https://bit.ly/3ng1uGE>
 - High Blood Pressure Increases Risk of Stroke Infographic <https://bit.ly/3dMKpkl>
 - Let's Talk About Stroke, TIA and Warning Signs <https://bit.ly/3sNQLUS>
- Pens
- Goody bags (optional): Reach out to local businesses, such as hospitals, wellness centers, local clinics and other health organizations. Ask them about donating giveaways for participants. Also, check out the American Heart Association online store (ShopHeart.org) for pamphlets or recipe booklets.

Audiovisual Needs

- Projector for PowerPoint slides.
- Internet connection (optional).

Wrap-Up

Reminder! Once your participants have left, be sure to complete the Ambassador Questionnaire. For details, see your Ambassador Guide, page 11.

Slide Program with Talking Points and Discussion Questions

The "Presenter Notes" section of the PowerPoint presentation includes scripted comments for the lesson. Use these to help walk through the lesson. To engage participants, the talking points also include discussion questions. For your reference, here is a list of the discussion questions:

- Do you know anyone who has had a stroke?
- Does anyone know what causes a stroke?
- Have you heard of Life's Simple 7®?



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- Do you try to live by Life's Simple 7®?
- Let's do a shout-out. The warning signs of a stroke are F.A.S.T.
 - F is for _____.
 - S is for _____.
 - A is for _____.
 - T is for _____.
- If someone has the F.A.S.T. warning signs, what should you do?
- 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?
- Has anyone had to call 911 for emergency care?
- What do you recall about the experience?
- What are the warning signs of a stroke?
- How long should you wait before calling 911?