

Stroke | Why “FAST” Isn’t Fast Enough Anymore

The acronym **FAST** (Face drooping, Arm weakness, Speech difficulty, Time to call 911) has saved countless lives by teaching people how to spot a stroke. But recent research shows strokes often show up in other ways first — and missing them can delay treatment.



What exactly is a stroke?

A stroke occurs when blood flow to the brain is disrupted. Most strokes (about 85%) are **ischemic strokes**, caused by a blood clot blocking an artery. The rest are **hemorrhagic strokes**, caused by a blood vessel bursting and bleeding into the brain. In both cases, brain cells are starved of oxygen and begin to die within minutes. That’s why doctors say, “time is brain.” The faster treatment begins, the more brain tissue can be saved.

The updated signs

- B** Balance problems
- E** Eyesight changes
- F** Face drooping
- A** Arm weakness
- S** Speech difficulty
- T** Time to call 911

BE FAST

Doctors now encourage expanding FAST to **BE FAST** to capture more early warnings:

These added signs matter because strokes can also appear as sudden loss of coordination, vision changes, or a severe unexplained headache. Even brief or mild episodes — sometimes called “mini-strokes” or TIAs — are serious red flags, often occurring days before a major stroke.

What causes a stroke?

High blood pressure is the leading cause. Other risks include atrial fibrillation (irregular heartbeat), diabetes, smoking, high cholesterol, obesity, and family history. The good news: managing these conditions can significantly reduce the risk.



Contact Us!
(877) 707-9111
info@apexcare.com
www.apexcare.com

Strokes don’t always fit the old FAST model. By learning BE FAST and understanding how strokes occur, you can recognize the danger sooner — and help protect the most vital organ of all: the brain.