

# Stroke

## What is it?

A stroke is a condition in which a blood vessel that carries oxygen to the brain is either blocked by a clot or ruptured, leading to the damage and death of both brain cells and or brain tissue.

Strokes predominantly affect the older population, with about **10% of adults aged 65 years and older** having experienced a stroke



10%

## Warning signs

- Sudden numbness in the legs, arms or face, especially on one side of the body
- Sudden confusion, difficulty speaking and or understanding speech
- Sudden vision loss in one or both eyes
- Use the F.A.S.T acronym to remember stroke signs: F = facial drooping, A = arm weaknesses, S = speech difficulty, T = time to call 911 (if any of these symptoms are present)

## Top caregiver do's

- Educate yourself - understand how stroke has affected your loved one, and actively learn more about the support systems in place for stroke survivors
- Consider safety (ex. modifying the home layout if the stroke has affected mobility/balance)
- Be mindful of the loved one's moods and behaviours - remain patient, and offer cordial support

## Impact on quality of life

Strokes are subjective as they can affect individuals in differing ways. Some stroke survivors may experience a partial paralysis of the body; many experience impediments in speech. Regardless of the specific, the aftermath of a stroke can be detrimental and can often greatly impact one's life in both the short and long term.

## Top caregiver don'ts

- Don't ignore falls - although they are relatively common in stroke survivors; note those more serious and take appropriate action (ex. visiting urgent care)
- Don't shy away from reaching out if in need of additional help or guidance in your care-taking. Providing care to stroke survivors can be confusing at times. Make use of accessible resources