



# LIFE AFTER STROKE

A GUIDE FOR PEOPLE AFFECTED BY  
STROKE AND THEIR FAMILIES

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## **LIFE AFTER STROKE:** **A guide for people affected by stroke and their families**

First published in 1998 by the Stroke Foundation of  
New Zealand.  
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other information services possible. To find out more  
about regular giving or bequests, please visit [stroke.org.nz](https://stroke.org.nz)

## **Stroke Foundation of New Zealand**

The Stroke Foundation is the national charity in  
New Zealand focused on the prevention of and  
recovery from stroke.

We actively promote ways to avoid stroke and dedicate  
ourselves to working closely with stroke survivors  
across the country.

The generosity of New Zealanders enables us to help  
thousands of stroke survivors every year; providing  
them with critical services to ensure the best possible  
outcomes – for themselves, and for their family/  
whanau and carers too.

Three quarters of strokes are preventable and  
our awareness campaigns and health promotion  
programmes help to save thousands of lives.

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The Stroke Foundation's values:



**Kaitiakitanga** Guard and protect people affected by stroke and help people  
to detect and manage stroke risks early.



**Manaakitanga** Care for others and be inclusive to everyone. Act with  
integrity and treat people with respect.



**Rangatiratanga** Enable people to be decision-makers over their health and  
wellbeing and achieve their best health outcomes.



**Whanaungatanga** Connect as a whānau and work together in everything  
that we do to make a significant difference.



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STROKE AND THEIR FAMILIES



[stroke.org.nz](http://stroke.org.nz)

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### 3rd edition

We are grateful to those staff who have provided the support in the formatting and copy changes to this edition. We also want to acknowledge those that have provided updated photographs and imagery for this new version.

### 2nd edition

Grateful appreciation is extended to the following people who carried out the review and revision of the second edition:

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### 1st edition

A large group of people advised on the content and format of the first edition, reviewed drafts and contributed from their own expertise and experience.

The project was led by Jonathan Baskett BHB, MB, ChB, FRACP, then Honorary Medical Director of the Stroke Foundation of New Zealand.

Pat Field was the chief writer and researcher.

The affiliations given below are those at the time of the 1st edition (1998).

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# HOW AND WHY THIS BOOK WAS PRODUCED



The first edition of **Life After Stroke: a guide for people with a stroke and their families** was published in 1998 as a direct response to a need expressed by stroke survivors and their families for more information on stroke and its implications and

impact on their lives. This need was identified by the Stroke Foundation in the process of producing **Life after stroke: New Zealand guidelines for best practice in rehabilitation after stroke** (Editor: Jonathan Baskett) in 1996, a publication for clinicians and health professionals. The resultant handbook for stroke survivors, their carers and families, and its accompanying videos have served the stroke community for nearly 15 years.

In 2010 the Stroke Foundation and the New Zealand Guidelines Group published the comprehensive **Clinical Guidelines for Stroke Management** which constitutes a definitive statement of clinical best practice in the care, treatment, secondary prevention and rehabilitation of stroke. In light of the substantial expansion of these guidelines from their 1996 and 2003 predecessors it was felt that a review of the survivors' and families' handbook was in order to ensure that all the best and most up-to-date advice was being passed on.

It is reassuring to report that changes in this 2023 update to the second edition are in fact quite small. That is testament to the excellent and thorough job carried out by the handbook's original authors and contributors who compiled a source of information and advice that is largely as valid in 2012 as it was in 1998.

The most immediately visible change is therefore cosmetic, but the handbook's contemporary design is important to dispel any fears that the previous edition's contents were in any way as dated as its appearance. Otherwise there are numerous smaller amendments which simplify and clarify with the benefit of the latest research evidence.

As the first edition acknowledged, no two strokes are exactly the same and the experiences of survivors are as unique as they are themselves. So while there will be questions left unanswered for some, it is hoped that the vast majority of issues will be addressed and directions given to where further help can be found.

We welcome feedback from stroke survivors and their whanau on how we can improve on this book, in preparation for a major review in 2024.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jo Lambert". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**Jo Lambert**  
**CEO, Stroke Foundation of New Zealand**



# HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book is colour coded into four main sections:

## 1. THE FIRST WEEK

This section covers the period when you first learn that a stroke has occurred, and gives information on:

- things you need to know about immediately
- how and why a stroke happens
- hospital procedures
- how to get the information and advice you need to plan for the future.

## 2. THE EFFECTS OF STROKE

This section describes the ways a stroke can affect a person and provides:

- an outline of how damage to different parts of the brain affects different functions
- examples of day-to-day difficulties which can result from the effects of stroke
- practical recommendations for coping with functional problems caused by a stroke.

## 3. THE REHABILITATION EXPERIENCE

This section covers living with a stroke in the longer-term and gives advice on:

- the rehabilitation process, including therapy and personal adaptation
- the feelings experienced after a stroke
- settling in to life at home again
- relationships – within the family and the community
- setting and achieving goals
- organising the household
- the needs of caregivers
- stroke in younger people.

## 4. FACTS AND FURTHER REFERENCE

- Regulations about driving after a stroke
- Stroke clubs
- Guidelines for preventing stroke; eating for health
- Statistics on stroke
- How to access assistance and further information.

Some parts of the book may not be applicable to your stroke or your family. Some topics may be of little interest immediately after your stroke, but important to you and your family later on. Rather than reading the book 'cover to cover', it will probably be most useful to dip into it, look up the things you want to find out about at any particular time, and keep it on hand for future reference.

To find your way around the book, use:

- ▶ the **Contents** to see the main topics covered and the general outline of the book.
- ▶ the **Index** to locate specific information (**see page 104**).
- ▶ the **Glossary** to find out the meaning and pronunciation of medical and other terms you are not familiar with (**see page 101**).

