



Workplace Toolkit

What to do and what NOT to do

What to do and what NOT to do when someone is having a stroke

During a stroke, the cells in the affected part of the brain start to die causing that part of the brain to not work properly. This can affect a person's ability to walk, talk, eat, see, read, socialise, or do things they were able to do before the stroke.

When you realise that you or someone else is having a stroke it is important to know what to do and what NOT to do.

How can you tell if someone is having a stroke?

By learning the F.A.S.T. check you will recognise up to 80% of the symptoms of stroke.

It's important to remember that a person may only suffer from one or a combination of these.

FACE Is their face drooping on one side? Can they smile?

ARM Is one arm weak? Can they raise both arms?

SPEECH Is their speech jumbled or slurred? Can they speak at all?

TAKE ACTION Call 111 immediately.

Other signs of stroke may include:

- Weakness or numbness or paralysis of the face, arm, or leg on either or both sides of the body.
- Dizziness, loss of balance or an unexplained fall.
- Loss of vision, sudden blurring, or decreased vision in one or both eyes.
- Headache, usually severe and abrupt onset, or unexplained change in the pattern of headaches.
- Difficulty swallowing

What to do when you think someone is having a stroke

1. **Call 111 immediately** Time = Brain.

Call for help once you notice the F.A.S.T. symptoms. Call quickly and then wait for the ambulance to arrive. The quicker medical treatment is started, the better chance of recovery.

2. Note the time you first noticed the FAST symptoms

This can help the medical team make a more informed decision on what treatment to perform.

3. Perform CPR if necessary

This is only necessary if the person having the stroke is unconscious. Check their pulse and breathing. The 111 dispatcher will be able to guide you while waiting for the ambulance to arrive.

What NOT to do when you think someone is having a stroke

These steps can hinder a stroke survivor having the best outcomes.

1. DO NOT let the person fall asleep or talk you out of calling 111

Despite many stroke survivors saying they feel sleepy and want a nap, lifesaving treatment is time sensitive. Call 111 immediately and wait for the ambulance.

2. DO NOT give them any food, drink, or medication.

As a stroke can affect one's ability to swallow, it is important to stay clear of any food and drink as this can cause choking. Also, some medication can cause the stroke to get worse.

3. DO NOT drive to the emergency department

Call 111 immediately and wait for the ambulance to arrive. Symptoms can worsen, and paramedics can provide lifesaving treatment on the way to the emergency room. If you are the one experiencing a stroke, your ability to drive can be impaired.

Possible Q&A

Which are the recommended ways to Take Action when someone is having a stroke?

Clue: 3 are correct!

- Give medication
- Have a nap
- Call 111 immediately
- Perform CPR
- Have some food or drink
- Note when symptoms started
- Drive to the emergency department

Answer: Call 111 immediately as Time = Brain

Note when the symptoms started

Perform CPR only if the person is unconscious