

Women Need to Think about Stroke

Every 40 seconds, someone in the U.S. suffers a stroke.



A stroke can happen to anyone; however, evidence shows that women are more likely to have a stroke. In fact, one in five women between the ages of 55 and 75 are at risk for stroke (compared to one in six men).

"Many people know the signs of a heart attack, but it's just as important to understand the risk factors and warning signs for stroke," says Felipe De Los Rios, M.D., neurologist and medical director for the stroke program at Miami Neuroscience Institute at Baptist Health. "Women especially need to be aware of stroke signs, symptoms and risks."

Why is stroke risk higher for a woman?

Women tend to live longer than men, and stroke risk increases with age. But

that's only part of the explanation for the higher rates of stroke they experience. Other specific risk factors for women include:

- Use of oral contraceptives, especially combined with smoking.
- Use of hormonal therapy.
- Menopause, especially in the 10 years after menopause starts.
- Pregnancy, especially just before, during and after giving birth.
- High blood pressure during pregnancy.

"Starting around age 40, women should talk with their doctors about stroke risk and get screened for high blood pressure, diabetes and high cholesterol," Dr. De Los Rios says.

Time Is Brain

When it comes to getting treatment for a possible stroke, the mantra is "time is brain." The faster you're treated, the more you reduce your chance of a long-term disability or dying.

If you are with anyone who experiences stroke symptoms, dial 911 immediately.

"EMS teams know which hospitals have the resources to treat someone with a stroke," Dr. De Los Rios mentions. "Dialing 911 is the best way to ensure the individual will end up in a primary or comprehensive stroke center."

Timely Treatment Saves Lives

A comprehensive stroke center, like the one at Baptist Hospital, means the hospital can treat the most complex stroke cases quickly. This designation is made by several different organizations, the most prestigious of which is The Joint Commission. At Baptist Hospital of Miami, our comprehensive stroke center has been recognized by The Joint

Commission, American Heart Association and the American Stroke Association.

When ischemic stroke patients arrive at Baptist Hospital, they receive life-saving tPA treatment less than 30 minutes from the time they arrive in the emergency room. Baptist neurologists also work closely with colleagues at Miami Cardiac & Vascular Institute and interventional neuroradiologists to coordinate endovascular surgery, another life-saving treatment for strokes. Patients at Baptist Hospital consistently receive this critical treatment in under 60 minutes of emergency room arrival.

"Our patients have access to every form of advanced testing, treatment and rehabilitation all under one roof," says Dr. De Los Rios. "When you come to Baptist Health South Florida for stroke treatment, we will provide comprehensive care that prevents long-term complications and improves lives."

Know the Signs of Stroke

The symptoms of a stroke look the same in both men and women. The best way to remember signs of stroke is to think **F.A.S.T.**:

- **Face drooping**
- **Arm weakness**
- **Speech difficulty**
- **Time to call 911**

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When stroke occurs, seconds count.

Comprehensive Stroke Center status means that Miami Neuroscience Institute has the resources, staff and training necessary to treat patients with the most complex strokes 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Baptist Hospital, the Institute's hub, is ranked among America's best hospitals for neurology and neurosurgery. The Institute treats more stroke patients than any other facility in South Florida, as well as a full range of other conditions of the brain, spine and nervous system.



[BaptistHealth.net/Stroke](https://www.baptisthealth.net/stroke)



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