



American Heart Association®

Hard Hats with Heart™



Toolbox Talks

How Stroke Affects You

The Sides of the Brain

Where a stroke occurs may change what is experienced. A stroke on the left side of the brain affects the right side of the body and you may experience some of the following:

- Speech and language problems
- Inability to read, write and learn new information
- Impaired ability to do math or to organize, reason and analyze things

A stroke on the right side of the brain affects the left side of the body and you may experience some of the following:

- Problems with depth perception or directions, such as up or down, and front and back
- Inability to be creative, such as painting a picture, or to appreciate art and music
- Failure to recognize the emotion in someone's voice

Moving & Sensing Things

The human brain has different areas that control how the body moves and feels. When a stroke damages a certain part of the brain, that part may not work as well as it did before. This can cause problems with walking, speaking, seeing or feeling. There may be challenges with basic self-care such as bathing or dressing, eating, swallowing, memory, emotions and understanding surroundings that should be familiar.

Effects of a Stroke

After a stroke, you may have emotional and physical changes. Depending on the amount of brain damaged and the part of your brain that was affected, you might have problems with: seeing, sleeping, having seizures, controlling your bladder or bowels, moving parts of your body, pain, fatigue, thinking, memory, depression.

Frequently Asked Questions:

What are risk factors that are under my control?

Stroke is dangerous and deadly, but you can control and treat several risk factors for it, including: high blood pressure, smoking, diabetes, diet, physician inactivity, obesity, high cholesterol, and heart disease (such as carotid artery disease, peripheral artery disease, atrial fibrillation, etc).

Discussion Questions:

- What are the warning signs of a stroke? (Hint: F.A.S.T.)