

# STROKE

## risk factors, diagnosis and prevention



**ACCORDING TO DATA FROM THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO) AND THE GLOBAL BURDEN OF DISEASE STUDY, APPROXIMATELY 25% OF PEOPLE WORLDWIDE – OR ONE IN FOUR – WILL EXPERIENCE A STROKE DURING THEIR LIFETIME**

**STROKE IS ONE OF THE MOST SERIOUS LIFESTYLE DISEASES AND IS THE SECOND MOST COMMON CAUSE OF DEATH IN THE WORLD**

**STROKE IS NOT JUST A DISEASE OF OLDER PEOPLE – ABOUT 10–15% OF STROKES OCCUR IN YOUNG PEOPLE (18–50 YEARS OLD)**

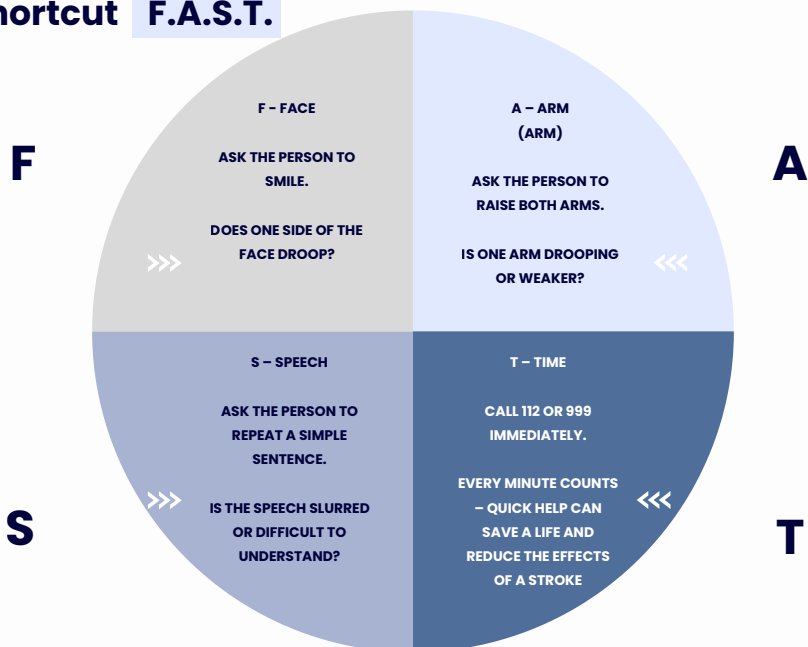
**1 IN 10 STROKES OCCURS IN YOUNG PEOPLE**

## Stroke Prevention Measures

The risk of stroke can be significantly reduced by adopting a healthy lifestyle and regular health checkups

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular blood pressure checks, because hypertension is one of the main risk factors for stroke</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>maintaining a healthy body weight and regular physical activity</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>monitoring blood sugar levels and appropriate diabetes treatment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a healthy and balanced diet rich in vegetables, fruits, and whole grains</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>control of cholesterol levels and lipid profile</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>limiting alcohol consumption</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>early detection of heart disease, especially atrial fibrillation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>giving up smoking</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>use of antiplatelet or anticoagulant therapy if recommended by a physician</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular check-ups with a doctor and preventive examinations. Taking these actions can effectively reduce the risk of stroke and other cardiovascular diseases</li> </ul>

## Use a shortcut **F.A.S.T.**





# RISK FACTORS

interreg



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EMERGENCY

NEXT Poland – Ukraine

<b>Elevated Cholesterol and Lipid Disorders</b>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Arterial hypertension</b>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Diabetes</b>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>A History of Non-Cardioembolic Stroke</b>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Cardioembolic stroke - atrial fibrillation, heart disease</b>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Family history of stroke</b>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Migraine (especially with aura)</b>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Harmful Habits</b>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Smoking, overweight, obesity, and lack of physical activity, excessive alcohol consumption</b>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Other diseases (atherosclerosis and carotid artery stenosis, previous stroke or TIA)</b>	<input type="radio"/>

# HOW TO AVOID RELAPSE?



<b>Monitoring under medical supervision</b>	<p>Regular medical checkups are very important after a stroke. It is recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In the first 3 months after a stroke, visits to a neurologist once a month,</li><li>• From 3 to 12 months, visits every 3 months,</li><li>• In subsequent years, visits at least twice a year to assess health status and adjust treatment.</li></ul> <p>People without chronic illnesses should have at least one follow-up visit to their family doctor per year to monitor stroke risk factors.</p>
<b>Physical activity</b>	<p>The following is recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• moderate physical activity for at least 10 minutes, four times a week,</li><li>• or more intense physical activity for approximately 20 minutes twice a week.</li></ul> <p>For people with limited mobility, exercises under the supervision of a specialist or physiotherapist are recommended.</p>
<b>Avoiding smoking</b>	<p>Smoking significantly increases the risk of stroke – up to 2-4 times. This also applies to passive smoking, i.e. being around people who smoke.</p>
<b>Limit your alcohol consumption</b>	<p>Excessive alcohol consumption increases the risk of cardiovascular disease, including stroke. Therefore, it is recommended to limit alcohol consumption.</p>
<b>Sleep apnea screening</b>	<p>People with suspected obstructive sleep apnea may be referred for specialized diagnostic testing.</p> <p>If the condition is confirmed, appropriate treatment is provided, which can improve health and reduce the risk of post-stroke complications.</p>
<b>A Healthy Diet</b>	<p>A diet rich in the following is recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• vegetables and fruits,</li><li>• whole grains,</li><li>• fish, legumes, and nuts,</li><li>• low-fat dairy products.</li></ul> <p>At the same time, you should limit your intake of salt, sweets, and red meat.</p>

# QUESTIONS TO ASK DURING A DOCTOR'S VISIT



**Are my blood pressure and blood sugar levels normal?**



**Is my weight normal, and should I try to change it?**



**What kind of physical activity can I safely do?**



**Should I have my neck blood vessels examined?**



**Is it necessary to have a heart exam to check for arrhythmias?**



**Can sleep apnea affect my health?**



**What steps can I take to reduce my risk of stroke?**

Regular check-ups with your doctor and following medical advice can effectively help prevent cardiovascular disease and stroke.

## ANALYSIS AND DIAGNOSTICS



**Lipid profile (cholesterol and triglycerides) – once a year, especially after age 40 or earlier if risk factors are present**



**Fasting blood glucose level – once a year, especially for people over 45 or those who are overweight**



**ECG test – recommended once a year after age 40 or if you experience symptoms of an irregular heartbeat**



**Carotid artery ultrasound (Doppler ultrasound) – performed after age 40–45 or in people with risk factors, usually every few years**



**Echocardiography – performed as directed by a doctor to assess heart function**



**Blood tests to assess bodily functions – performed as directed by a doctor**

Regular diagnostic testing enables the early detection of diseases and risk factors for stroke.



Stroke prevention, early recognition of symptoms, and prompt medical attention can save lives and reduce the risk of serious complications. Regular checkups, a healthy lifestyle, and managing risk factors help effectively prevent strokes and their recurrence. Remember: if stroke symptoms occur, seek medical help immediately

 <p>Emergency number – 112 or 999</p>	<p>Emergency number – 103 Hotline – 0 800 333 00303</p> 
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In Poland, the diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation following a stroke are funded through the public healthcare system by the National Health Fund (NFZ). Patients have access to primary care, specialist consultations, inpatient treatment, and rehabilitation.

Stroke prevention includes medications that help control blood pressure, lower cholesterol levels, and prevent blood clots. Some of these medications are reimbursed and available free of charge or with a partial copayment.

Medications are dispensed based on a doctor's prescription (e-prescription) under the current reimbursement system. Regular treatment and monitoring of risk factors help reduce the likelihood of a stroke and its recurrence.

Medical services are funded by the National Health Service and are free of charge to patients. The "Accessible Medicines" program provides patients with cardiovascular diseases with free or partially subsidized prescription medications via electronic prescriptions. The list includes amlodipine, bisoprolol, enalapril, statins (simvastatin), and other active ingredients (clopidogrel, losartan, nifedipine) used to treat hypertension and prevent heart attacks and strokes.

### Project Information

The catalog of good practices was developed as part of the project "Joint initiative of the Masovian Specialist Hospital named after Dr. Józef Psarski in Ostrołęka and the First Lviv Territorial Medical Union in Lviv to increase the availability of healthcare services" implemented under the Interreg NEXT Poland – Ukraine 2021-2027 Program

### Project partners

Lead Partner: Masovian Specialist Hospital named after Dr. Józef Psarski in Ostrołęka

Project Partner: First Lviv Territorial Medical Union

The content of this publication reflects the views only of the project partners and does not necessarily reflect the position of the European Union

