

Would you know what to do if someone had a stroke?

A stroke is a disruption in the blood supply to the brain. Most strokes are caused by blockages (usually blood clots) disrupting the brain's blood supply. These are called ischaemic strokes. Some strokes are caused by bleeds. These are called haemorrhagic strokes.

A transient ischaemic attack (also known as a TIA or mini-stroke) is the same as a stroke, but the blood supply is only disrupted for a short time, and usually not completely. Symptoms usually pass in less than 24 hours.

Whilst Stroke is a leading cause of death and disability, causing around 38,000 deaths each year in the UK, there are around 1.4 million people living in the UK that have survived a stroke or TIA.

The best way to help prevent a stroke is to eat a healthy diet, exercise regularly, and avoid smoking and drinking too much alcohol. These lifestyle changes can reduce your risk of problems like high blood pressure and high cholesterol levels. The main stroke symptoms can be remembered with the acronym **FAST**:

Face – the face may have dropped on 1 side, the person may not be able to smile, or their mouth or eye may have drooped.

Arms – the person may not be able to lift both arms and keep them there because of weakness or numbness in 1 arm.

Speech – their speech may be slurred or garbled, or the person may not be able to talk at all despite appearing to be awake; they may also have problems understanding what you're saying to them.

Time – it's time to dial 999 immediately if you notice any of these signs or symptoms.

If you suspect you or someone else is having a stroke, phone 999 immediately and ask for an ambulance.

In the recent UKMSA survey on Health & Wellbeing 25% of Shed leaders reported that Strokes were a health and wellbeing condition that caused them concern.

The [Stroke Association](#) has three excellent booklets; 'How to reduce your risk of a stroke'; 'Next steps after a stroke' and 'Supporting a stroke survivor'.

Whilst many Stroke survivors may have long term impacts arising from their Strokes, many Men's Sheds have been successful in helping Stroke survivors rebuild their lives.

These Men's Sheds have publicised their stories about Stroke Survivors in their Shed: [Saintfield Men's Shed](#), Ballynahinch, Co Down, [Southdown Men in Sheds](#), Portslade, the [Montrose Shed](#), Men's Shed in Clacton, the [Oakworth Shed](#), Keighley, and the [Renew Shed](#) in Swindon. The Renew Shed started a men's session specifically for stroke survivors in partnership with the Community Stroke team at the Great Western Hospital.

