

Adults



Heart/Stroke Symptoms

FAST is the word to remember if someone is experiencing signs of stroke. Follow these guidelines to identify the signs of stroke and take action immediately.

- **Face Drooping.** If one side of the face is numb or drooping, ask the person to smile and notice if the smile is uneven.
- **Arm Weakness.** Ask the person to raise both arms and check if one arm is weak or numb. Notice if one arm hangs down to the side when attempting to keep both arms up.
- **Speech Difficulty.** Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence. Pay attention to slurred speech, inability to speak or understand what you are asking, and incorrectly repeating sentences.
- **Time to call 911.** If you notice any of the symptoms above, call 911 and get to the hospital quickly. Note the time the symptoms appeared. Call 911 even if the symptoms go away. If you are experiencing these symptoms, call 911 and do not drive.

In addition to the FAST check, symptoms of chest discomfort or pain, shortness of breath, breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea and vomiting are additional signs of heart trouble. Sudden confusion or dizziness, vision problems in one or both eyes, loss of balance and severe headache may accompany the FAST signs mentioned above.

Information gathered from American Stroke Association, National Stroke Association, and National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute

www.strokeassociation.org
www.stroke.org
www.nhlbi.nih.gov



Heart Attack Awareness

A heart attack occurs every 34 seconds. Heart attack symptoms involve intense discomfort in the center of the chest. The signs of a heart attack resemble stroke symptoms, but heart attack symptoms are frequently sudden and intense.

The discomfort associated with heart attack lasts more than a few minutes, or goes away and comes back. It feels like pressure, fullness in the chest, pain or squeezing. Pain occurs in one or both arms, in the back, neck, jaw or stomach. Shortness of breath occurs with or without chest discomfort.

Women are more likely to experience a broader range of symptoms, such as shortness of breath, nausea and vomiting, fainting, upper back pressure or jaw pain, even common health symptoms like acid reflux or experiencing signs of flu.

Additional symptoms of heart attack include nausea, feeling lightheaded and breaking out into a cold sweat. If any signs of heart attack are present, call 911 immediately. If you have general symptoms of concern, be sure to visit your doctor.

Information gathered from American Heart Association
www.heart.org



Yearly Doctor Visit Checks

Yearly check-ups are important steps to staying healthy. Your doctor can help you stay on track with immunizations, screen for possible diseases, and check your risk of medical issues. High blood pressure and high cholesterol often go unnoticed until discovered during an annual exam.

Screenings to consider during your exam include blood pressure checks, cholesterol and diabetes screening, and a general physical exam. In addition, women should have annual breast and pelvic exams, including a pap smear. It is crucial to maintain a relationship with your healthcare provider in order for them to remain aware of medical issues and track of any concerns or risks.

*Information gathered from MedlinePlus
www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus*

Distracted and Tired Driving

Distracted driving is doing any activity that takes attention away from focusing on driving. Many drivers fail to recognize how dangerous simple actions such as texting and talking can be to fellow drivers. Over 800,000 vehicles are operated by someone using a cell phone at any time during the day.

Examples of Distracted Driving

- Texting and using a cell phone

- Eating and drinking
- Talking
- Doing hair and makeup
- Reading
- Watching videos
- Adjusting music devices (CD/mp3 players or radio)



Texting takes your attention away from the road for about five seconds, which is equal to driving blind at 55 mph for the length of a football field. Even hand-held devices cause distraction.

Tired Driving

Sixty percent of adult drivers drove a vehicle while drowsy within the past year and over one third drove while asleep. At least 100,000 crashes are caused by tired drivers every year, resulting in over 70,000 injuries and countless deaths.

You can take simple steps to prevent drowsy driving. Get seven to nine hours of sleep and schedule breaks during long trips. Travel with a friend to help share the driving. Avoid alcohol and sleep medications. Check medication labels for possible side effects.

If you feel sleepy while driving:

- **Stop driving immediately.** Stay at a hotel for the night to let your body recover.
- **Take a nap.** Pull into a well-lit area and nap for 15 to 20 minutes. If you need extra sleep, find a hotel before continuing to drive.
- **Drink a beverage with caffeine.** Caffeine helps with short-term alertness, but requires continued use to be affective for longer distances. When in doubt, take a nap or stay at a hotel.
- **Pay attention to rumble strips.** Pull off the road if you hit a rumble strip or road shoulder while drowsy.

*Information gathered from the
Official U.S. Government Website for Distracted Driving
and National Sleep Foundation*

www.distraction.gov

www.drowsydriving.org

Keeping your Brain Engaged

A healthy brain plays a vital role in every kind of daily activity. Thinking and feeling, remembering, working and playing all involve the brain. Keeping your brain active is important to maintaining health and preventing Alzheimer's disease and dementia. Taking care of your brain is a wise step to take for overall wellness during the aging process.

Tips to Maintain Brain Health

- **Stay active.** Exercise helps keep up healthy blood flow to the brain and cuts your risk of heart attack, stroke, and diabetes. Lowering the risk of these conditions helps protect against brain conditions like Alzheimer's and dementia.
- **Eat healthy.** High cholesterol is a contributing factor to stroke and brain damage. Eat a low fat and low cholesterol diet rich in fruits and dark vegetables to help protect brain cells.
- **Stay social.** Keeping up with friends lowers stress levels and helps your brain stay active,

lowering your risk of brain disease and promoting healthy brain cell connections.

- **Stay mentally active.** Activities like crosswords and challenging word games keep your brain busy and help create additional nerve cells.

Risks factors for Alzheimer's disease and dementia include genetics and aging. Incorporating brain-healthy activities helps protect against disease and improve brain health.

*Information gathered from Alzheimer's Association
www.alz.org*

Exercise and Preventing Overuse Injuries

Exercise is beneficial for all age groups, but staying safe is just as important as keeping your body fit. When starting a new aerobic exercise program, begin with 10 minutes of activity at a time before gauging your overall level of ability. When using weights, begin with lighter weights and slowly add more weight as you build up strength.

Plan carefully before starting to exercise. Repetitive trauma can lead to muscle or joint injury. Starting to exercise for too long and too often can strain muscles and lead to injury. Using poor form during exercise can throw off your body and put extra strain on muscles that overcompensate.

Injuries occur more often as you age; it is vital to be aware of the effects of aging on the body. Ask your doctor about any activities you should avoid doing due to certain health conditions. Your doctor can give advice on appropriate exercises with regard to your medical history and current condition. Remember, there are many ways to stay in shape regardless of health condition or physical issues.

*Information gathered from Go4Life and Mayo Clinic
www.go4life.nia.nih.gov
www.mayoclinic.com*

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