

# 4 Steps to Preventing Stroke if You have Diabetes

If you have type 2 diabetes, you are at increased risk for stroke. There are steps you can take to reduce your risk. Start with these:

-  1. Talk to your doctor to set goals for controlling your diabetes.
-  2. Take your medicine as instructed by your doctor.
-  3. Continue healthy eating habits and keep moving.
-  4. Manage your blood pressure, cholesterol and diabetes.

## What causes a stroke?

A stroke is caused by damage to the blood vessels carrying blood and oxygen to your brain. If one of those blood vessels is blocked or bursts, it prevents blood and oxygen from reaching your brain.

## How are stroke and type 2 diabetes connected?

Unmanaged diabetes damages your blood vessels over time. Excess blood glucose (also called blood sugar) makes blood vessels stiff and the vessels can also fill with plaque (a fatty substance). Plaque leads to blockages.

## Recognize the signs of a stroke:

# F.A.S.T.

Face  
Drooping

Arm  
Weakness

Speech  
Difficulty

Time to  
Call 911

**IF YOU DO HAVE DIABETES,** there is a lot more you can do to reduce your risk for stroke.

Talk to your doctor about your next steps. You're not in this alone. Find answers to your questions and join the initiative: [KnowDiabetesbyHeart.org/join](https://www.knowdiabetesbyheart.org/join).