

Contact Us (/MyWellmont/Contact-Us/) Careers (/Careers/)

Our Mission (/Our-Mission/About-Us/) Our Providers (/Our-Providers/) Our Services (/Our-Services/) Our Facilities (/Our-Facilities/)
 Health & Wellness (/Health-and-Wellness/) Patients & Visitors (/Patients-and-Visitors/) MyWellmont (/mywellmont/)

Heart Care (/Our-Services/Heart-Care/)
 Cancer Care (/Our-Services/Cancer-Care/)
 Blood Donation Centers (/Donate-Save-Local-Lives-at-Marsh-Regional-Blood-Center/)
 Diabetes (/Medical-Services/Diabetes/Diabetes.aspx)
 Emergency & Trauma (/Medical-Services/Emergency-and-Trauma/Emergency-and-Trauma.aspx)
 Children (/Our-Services/Children/)
 Family Medicine (/Wellmont-Physicians/Wellmont-Medical-Associates/Medical-Specialties/Family-Medicine/)
 Hearing Services (/Medical-Services/Hearing-and-Audiology-Services.aspx)
 Home Care (/Medical-Services/Home-Care/home-care.aspx)
 Hospitalists (/Medical-Services/Hospitalists/Hospitalists.aspx)
 Hospice Care (/Medical-Services/Hospice/Hospice/)
 Internal Medicine (/Wellmont-Physicians/Wellmont-Medical-Associates/Medical-Specialties/Internal-Medicine/)
 Neuroscience - Brain & Spine (/Our-Services/Neuroscience/)
 Occupational Medicine (/Our-Services/Occupational-Medicine/)
 Orthopedics (/Our-Services/Orthopedics/)
 Palliative Care (/Medical-Services/Palliative-Care/Palliative-Care-Services.aspx)
 Psychiatry (/Medical-Services/Psychiatric/Psychiatric.aspx)
 Pulmonology & Sleep (/Our-Services/Pulmonology-and-Sleep-Medicine/)
 Radiology (/Medical-Services/Radiology/Radiology.aspx)
 Rehabilitation & Therapy (/Medical-Services/Rehabilitation/Rehabilitation-and-Therapy.aspx)
Stroke Care (/Medical-Services/Stroke-Care/Stroke-Care/)
 Surgery (/Our-Services/Surgery/)
 Urgent Care & After-Hours Clinics (/Medical-Services/Emergency-and-Trauma/Wellmont-Urgent-Care/)
 Weight Loss Services (/Our-Services/Weight-Loss/)
 Womens Health (/Our-Services/Womens-Health/)

Stroke Care



Every minute counts during a stroke.

Acting fast greatly increases the chances of treating a stroke effectively. Actually, the most effective stroke treatments are only available when a stroke is recognized and diagnosed within three hours of symptoms first appearing.

How can you tell if someone's having a stroke?

Think F.A.S.T.

To recognize a stroke, just remember the acronym F.A.S.T.:

- **Face drooping** – Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop?
- **Arm weakness** – Does one arm drift downward if you ask the person to raise both arms?
- **Speech difficulty** – Can the person repeat a simple sentence correctly? Are his or her words slurred?
- **Time to call** – Did you observe any of these signs of stroke? If so, time is critical. Get the person to the hospital as quickly as possible.

If you see any of these stroke symptoms, don't wait to get help. Call 9-1-1 immediately.

Since arteries and blood vessels supply blood to different parts of the brain, strokes can cause a variety of symptoms, including:

- Slurred speech or inappropriate words
- Difficulty understanding others
- Numbness, weakness or paralysis on one side of the body
- Blurred or impaired vision
- Facial droop
- Dizziness
- Loss of balance
- Decreased consciousness
- Severe headache

It's important to keep in mind that not all symptoms will be observed in every stroke.

Again, if you think you or someone else might be having a stroke, call 9-1-1 right away. There's no time to lose!

Emergency medical service responders know the importance of getting fast treatment and will work to rapidly and safely transport the stroke victim to the hospital.

What is a stroke?

Reduce your risk for stroke

Because lifestyle significantly impacts a your risk of having a stroke, you can easily reduce their stroke risk factors by following these basic guidelines:

- Keep your blood pressure under control.
- Manage conditions such as irregular heartbeat.
- Stop smoking, or don't start.
- Practice moderation with alcohol consumption.
- Control your cholesterol level.
- Exercise daily.
- Decrease sodium and fat in your diet.
- Discuss any circulation issues with your doctor.



<http://www.jointcommission.org/certification/prim>



<http://www.stroke.org>

A stroke happens when blood flow to the brain is interrupted. This can be caused by a clot blocking the flow of blood through the blood vessels or when a vessel bursts.

The brain has one of the body's highest oxygen demands. Because blood delivers oxygen to the brain (like it does to the rest of the body), when blood flow to the brain stops, brain cells start to die.

This happens even if the stroke only lasts a few minutes. The death of brain cells can even cause permanent brain damage. This is why it's so important to get help fast.

There are several different kinds of strokes:

- Transient ischemic attack, which is sometimes called a mini-stroke
- Ischemia or blocked artery (embolic or thrombotic)
- Hemorrhagic stroke or burst blood vessel (intercerebral and subarachnoid aneurysms)

Why choose Wellmont for stroke care?

Prompt treatment with the latest technologies

[Holston Valley Medical Center \(/Our-Facilities/Hospitals-And-Medical-Centers/Holston-Valley-Medical-Center/\)](#) and [Bristol Regional Medical Center \(/Our-Facilities/Hospitals-And-Medical-Centers/Bristol-Regional-Medical-Center/\)](#) are regional leaders in superior stroke care.

Speed and expertise are essential to saving lives and minimizing the damage a stroke can cause. So when a stroke occurs, the experts at Wellmont Health System are ready to care for patients quickly.

Once a patient arrives, treatment can often begin immediately using the latest imaging technologies, stroke treatment protocols and medicines like tPA clot-busters to restore vital blood flow to the brain.

Stroke center certification

Both Holston Valley and Bristol Regional have been designated as Advanced Primary Stroke Centers by [The Joint Commission](#) (http://www.jointcommission.org/certification/primary_stroke_centers.aspx). This means our stroke programs:

- Provide the next generation of stroke care
- Have met and seek to maintain The Joint Commission's high standards in providing superior stroke care

24/7 coverage

The Advanced Primary Stroke Centers at Holston Valley and Bristol Regional provide neurosurgery and neurohospitalist coverage 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Our stroke center professionals also provide their expertise to other member hospitals when stroke patients arrive.

Neurology telemedicine

Through telemedicine capabilities at Holston Valley and Bristol Regional, EEG (electroencephalogram) brain wave strips can be received from EMTs remotely. This allows stroke experts in the hospital to begin diagnosing the condition and considering treatment options before a patient arrives.

Wellmont's experienced physicians use several advanced diagnostic tools to evaluate strokes, including:

- Carotid ultrasound
- TEE (transesophageal echogram)
- CT and CTA (computed tomography angiogram) scans
- MRI and MRA (magnetic resonance angiogram) imaging
- Angiography

Stroke recovery and rehabilitation

With dedicated areas for stroke patients staffed by exceptional physicians, nurses and specialists, Wellmont offers a compassionate environment for recovery and rehabilitation after a stroke.

Our approach includes inpatient and outpatient stroke treatment, with a continuity of care from stroke onset through rehab.

Physical therapists help patients increase their range of motion. Occupational therapists help regain the skills necessary for everyday activities. And speech therapists work to re-establish communication skills that may have been affected.

Appalachian Regional Stroke Center Network

The Appalachian Regional Stroke Center Network is a group of "stroke-ready" hospitals. Each member hospital follows treatment protocols based on the guidelines from several national organizations, including:

- **American Stroke Association**
(<http://www.strokeassociation.org/>)
- **The Brain Attack Coalition**
(<http://www.brainattackcoalition.org/>)
- **National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke**
(<http://www.ninds.nih.gov/>)
- **National Stroke Association** (<http://www.stroke.org/>)

This network of advanced care and expertise means patients in the Tri-Cities region – including the most rural areas of Upper East TN and Southwest VA – can receive effective stroke care quickly.

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