

Stroke Patient Handbook

This leaflet offers more information about your stroke. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to the keyworker or staff member looking after you.

Name: _____

Date of stroke: _____

Keyworker: _____

Thomas Young Ward: 020 8266 6544

What is a stroke?

A stroke is a brain attack. It happens when the blood supply to a part of your brain is suddenly reduced. Blood carries essential nutrients to your brain. Without blood, your brain cells can be damaged and they will not be able to do their job.

How does a stroke happen?

Blood flow to the brain can be cut off by a blockage or a bleed in the brain.

A blockage can be caused by:

- a blood clot in an artery or blood vessels in the brain or
- a blood clot is carried in the bloodstream to one of the arteries supplying the brain.

A bleed can be caused by:

- a blood vessel becoming weak and beginning to leak within the brain.

No stroke is the same as another. Symptoms depend on the part of the brain that is affected.

If the left side of your brain is affected, you may have difficulty on the right side of the body (and vice versa).

When language is affected, the damage is usually on the left side of the brain.

The recovery which people make also varies. No two people are affected in the same way so we assess and treat everyone according to how their stroke has affected them.

What type of stroke did I have?

Blockage: this is called an **infarct**.

Bleeding: this is called a **haemorrhage**.

My stroke was caused by: **blockage / bleeding**

It happened on the **right / left** side of the brain

The stroke happened on **this date:** ____/____/____

What happens on the stroke unit?

You will have an assessment from a team of stroke specialists. This includes doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, dieticians, psychologists all working together with you to agree on certain things you want to achieve – these are called goals.

You will also have tests to try to find out why you had the stroke and what your risk factors are.

Tests you may have to find out the cause of your stroke

(Only some of these may be relevant for you.)

Computerised Tomography (CT scan) of the Head

A scan to take pictures of the brain and build up a picture of the area damaged by a stroke.

My result:

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)

A type of scan which can produce more detailed images of the brain if required.

My result:

Carotid Doppler scan

An ultrasound scan which uses sound waves to look at the blood flow in the carotid artery in the neck.

My result:

Electrocardiogram (ECG) / 24 hour ECG

A heart tracing that records your heart rate and rhythm. Sometimes this is recorded for a longer period of time (for example 24 hours or seven days) using a monitor that you wear.

My result:

Echocardiogram

An ultrasound scan which uses sound waves to build up an image of the heart. This may detect clots or abnormalities of the heart valves.

My result:

Blood glucose **My result:** _____

Glucose is the sugar that is found in the blood. This tests looks to see if you could have diabetes (which can increase the risk of stroke).

Cholesterol level check **My result:** _____

High cholesterol is associated with an increased risk of stroke caused by blockages.

Reducing the risk of another stroke

There are things you can do to reduce your risk of having more strokes and help you stay as healthy as possible. Some things you can do yourself, others may include medical treatments from your doctor. It is important to know what your own risk factors are.

Risk Factor	Tick if present	What can be done?
High Cholesterol		
High Blood Pressure		
Diabetes		
Atrial Fibrillation		
Smoking		

Blood clotting problems		
Unhealthy diet		
Overweight		
High alcohol intake		

Medication to reduce the risk of stroke

I have been prescribed the following medicines to help prevent another stroke:

To thin my blood

.....



To reduce my blood pressure:

.....



To reduce my cholesterol:

.....



To ensure good control of diabetes:

.....

You may be given other medications for other conditions linked to your stroke. If so, these will be explained to you. You may also be taking other medications already prescribed by your GP in addition to those listed above.

What are side effects?

Side effects are unwanted symptoms caused by your medicine. A small number of people will have side effects.

Your doctor or pharmacist will warn you if there are any important side effects to look out for. Please let a staff member know if you think you are having a side effect.

My Personal Goals

These are the things I find difficult.....

Date	My Problems	Date Resolved

The things I want to achieve.....

Priority	Date	Agreed Goals	Outcome

Questions for the Team

It is sometimes helpful to write down the questions you want to ask whilst you remember.
You may also find it helpful to write down the answer you receive.

Question:

Answer:

Question:

Answer:

Question:

Answer:

Question:

Useful sources of information

Please do not hesitate to ask the staff looking after you, or your key worker if you have any questions about this handbook, or about your stroke.

The Stroke Association

Please help yourself to the Stroke Association leaflets in the stand by reception on Thomas Young ward. If there are any missing please do let us know.

For further support and advice visit the Stroke Association website: www.stroke.org.uk

Tel: 0303 3033 100

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about your stroke, please contact your Keyworker or the Ward Manager on 020 8266 6544 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm).

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.stgeorges.nhs.uk

Additional services

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough Wing (near the lift foyer).

Tel: 020 8725 2453 **Email:** pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk

NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.

Web: www.nhs.uk

NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

Tel: 111

AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all of our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website (www.accessable.co.uk). The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.

