

Statistics on stroke and aphasia in Northern Ireland

- Today in Northern Ireland **12** people will have a **stroke**. **Four** of those people will **recover**, **four** will have **permanent disabilities** and **four** will **die**.
 - Approximately 4,000 people in NI will have a stroke this year.²
 - In NI there are over 30,200 registered stroke survivors.
 - A stroke is a brain attack. A stroke happens due to a clot or a bleed in the brain, which causes brain cells to die.
 - A stroke is an emergency. If you see the signs of a stroke :
 - **F**acial weakness
 - **A**rm weakness
 - **S**peech Problems
 - **T**est these symptoms
 - **Act FAST** and call **999**. Early treatment saves lives and increases the chances of a better recovery.
 - Stroke is the 3rd biggest killer here and ultimately costs the UK around £7 billion every year, with direct cost to the NHS of nearly £3 billion.
 - Stroke costs the Health Service in Northern Ireland in the region of £80 million in direct care costs and £200 million in total costs.¹
 - 2,970 women in Northern Ireland will have a stroke this year³. 900 will die as a result and of these⁴, 360 could have been saved by simply controlling their blood pressure.⁵
 - 55 per cent of women in Northern Ireland don't even know what their blood pressure⁶ is and 56 per cent are unaware what an 'optimal' reading should be.⁶
 - Young women today may be up to 50% more likely to have a stroke than twenty years ago. The findings show that although the risk of stroke in men has fallen by nearly 50%, it has actually risen for women under the age of 55.⁹
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- There is a marked difference in trends between men and women. The risk of stroke for men across all age groups has fallen by nearly 50%, whereas women's risk of stroke has only reduced by about 20% overall, partly due to a rise in risk in women aged under 55.⁹
- Moderate exercise can decrease the chances of having a stroke by 27 per cent⁷ and eating your 'five-a-day' you can reduce the risk by a quarter.⁸
- Stroke is the main cause of aphasia and a leading cause of severe adult disability within Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK.
- Aphasia is a devastating communication disability acquired from a stroke or in some cases from a head injury. It is a largely hidden disability which seriously affects a person's ability to speak, read, write and communicate with the world around them.
- Stroke is the biggest disabler in NI with over 10,000 living with aphasia – a devastating communication disability caused by a stroke. More than Parkinson's Disease and Multiple Sclerosis combined.²
- It is estimated that there are between 1,000 -1,900 new cases of aphasia are diagnosed within Northern Ireland each year. This indicates that between 3 - 5 new cases of aphasia are diagnosed every day in Northern Ireland.²
- There are over 250,000 people in the UK living with aphasia.
- For every £50 spent on cancer research and £20 on heart disease research, only £1 is spent on stroke research.
- A Stroke Information Service (SIS), which is available to the general public. This includes a Stroke Helpline: 0845 3033100 (Monday – Friday 9am to 5pm). Enquiries can also be emailed to info@stroke.org.uk. Visit our website www.stroke.org.uk for more information.
- The Stroke Association Northern Ireland is part of the UK-wide Stroke Association and provides a united voice for stroke and aphasia across the UK. We want a world where there are fewer strokes and all those touched by stroke get the help they need.

The Stroke Association NI is a community-based charity which provides vital, professionally led services to stroke survivors and people living with aphasia, their carers and families right across Northern Ireland.

The Stroke Association Northern Ireland
 Graham House, Knockbracken Healthcare Park
 Saintfield Road
 Belfast, BT8 8BH

Helpline: 028 9050 8020 (Monday – Friday 9am-5pm)

Fax: 028 9050 8025

Email: northernireland@stroke.org.uk

Website: www.strokeni.org.uk and www.stroke.org.uk

References

¹ A National Audit Office Report on Stroke 2005

² Bamford C. and Gilliland, E. (2004) 'Evaluation Report of Speechmatters' Social Services Inspectorate Review

³ This figure is based on research showing that a third all people who have a stroke are likely to die. The 900 women who die per year are roughly a third of 2970. Reference: Bosanquet, N. and Franks, P., Stroke care: Reducing the burden of disease, 1998, The Stroke Association.

⁴ This figure is a third of 2,970. Allender, S., Petr, V., Scarborough, P., Boxer, A. and Rayner, M. (2006) Coronary Heart Disease Statistics, BHF London.

⁵ 40 per cent of all strokes could be prevented through the control of high blood pressure. Reference: Preventing Strokes by Lowering Blood Pressure in Patients with cerebral Ischemia, Jan van Gijn, MD, FRCP (Edin).

⁶ GfK NOP interviewed 1000 UK adults aged 16+ between 26 – 28 September and 1000 UK adults aged 16 + between 31st October and 2nd November 2008. The surveys were conducted via telephone methodology using a quota sample. Results have been weighted to be nationally representative all adults aged 16+ living in the UK

⁷ Lee, C.D et al, 'Physical Activity and Stroke Risk: A meta-analysis' on stroke, 2003, Vol 34,

⁸ The Lancet 2006 http://www.stroke.org.uk/media_centre/press_releases/eating_five.html

⁹ Peter Rothwell et al Oxford Vascular Study (OXVASC).