

# STROKES CAN HAPPEN AT ANY AGE



Pediatric stroke can happen in infants, children and even before birth.

## PERINATAL STROKE

Last few months of pregnancy to 1-month-old

## CHILDHOOD STROKE

1-month-old to 18 years

### RISK FACTORS

The cause in most perinatal strokes remains unknown.

Risk factors that could lead to stroke include:

- Congenital heart disease
- Disorders of the placenta
- Blood clotting disorders
- Infections (e.g. Meningitis)



Risk factors in children ≠ Risk factors in older adults

Risk factors for children include:

- Congenital heart disease
- Diseases affecting the brain's arteries
- Infections affecting the brain or other organs
- Head trauma
- Sickle cell disease
- Autoimmune disorders

No previous risk factor is identified in about half of childhood stroke cases.

### WARNING SIGNS

Signs of a perinatal stroke may go unrecognized for months or years because the signs can be subtle.

**NEWBORNS:**

Seizures may be an early sign:

- Repetitive twitching of face, arm or leg
- Apnea (pauses in breathing) associated with staring

**DEVELOPING CHILDREN:**

- Decreased movement or weakness on one side of the body
- Showing a hand preference, or consistently reaching out with only one hand before 1 year of age

Signs are often missed in children because there is a lack of awareness that strokes can happen in this age group.

STROKE SIGNS ▶

**F** | **A** | **S** | **T**  
FACE DROOPING | ARM WEAKNESS | SPEECH DIFFICULTY | TIME TO CALL 911

ADDITIONAL SIGNS IN CHILDREN INCLUDE:

- Severe sudden headache, especially with vomiting and sleepiness
- Weakness or numbness on one side of the body difficulty speaking or understanding others
- Vision loss or double vision
- Severe dizziness or loss of coordination
- New-onset of seizures usually on one side of the body

### TIME IS BRAIN AT ANY AGE

**NEWBORNS:**

Quick recognition ▶ Prompt medical evaluation and treatment

**BABIES:**

Early diagnosis ▶ Rehabilitation treatment can start while a young brain is still developing



**DON'T DELAY!**

Prompt diagnosis and treatment of stroke in children is as critical as it is in adults.