Think - F.A.S.T.
Use the following tool to help you recognize stroke symptoms FAST:

F=FACE  Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop?

A=ARMS  Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

S=SPEECH Ask the person to repeat a simple phrase. Does the speech sound slurred or strange?

T=TIME  If you observe any of these signs, then it's time to call 9-1-1.

Call 9-1-1 or get to the hospital fast.
Brain cells are dying.

NSA Recurrent Stroke Prevention Guidelines
Stroke is the third leading cause of death in America and the number one cause of adult disability. The good news is that 80% of strokes can be prevented.
National Stroke Association’s Recurrent Stroke Prevention Guidelines will help you learn how to lower your stroke risk.

• Know your blood pressure. If it is high, work with your doctor to control it. High blood pressure is a leading cause of stroke.
• Find out if you have atrial fibrillation (AF), which is an irregular heartbeat rhythm. If you have AF, work with your doctor to manage it.
• If you smoke, stop.
• If you drink alcohol, do so in moderation.
• Know your cholesterol number. If it is high, work with your doctor to control it.
• If you are diabetic, follow your doctor’s advice carefully to control your diabetes.
• Include exercise in your daily routine.
• Enjoy a lower sodium (salt), lower fat diet.
• Ask your doctor if you have circulation (blood flow) problems that increase your risk for stroke. If so, work with your doctor to control them.
• If you have any stroke symptoms, seek immediate medical attention.

For more information
Contact
National Stroke Association
1-800-STROKES
(1-800-787-6537)
What is stroke?
Stroke is a “brain attack” that occurs when the blood, which brings oxygen to your brain, stops flowing and brain cells die. Nearly 750,000 people in the United States will have a stroke each year.

What is a TIA?
A transient ischemic attack (TIA) is a mini-stroke, with stroke symptoms that last less than 24 hours before disappearing. While TIAs generally do not cause permanent brain damage, they are serious warning signs of stroke and should not be ignored.

What are the symptoms of a TIA?
The symptoms of a TIA and stroke are basically the same. Someone having a TIA or stroke may experience one or more of the following symptoms:

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination

If you have any of these symptoms or see them in someone else, even for a short time, call 911 or get to a hospital fast. Treatment can be more helpful if given quickly. Stroke is an Emergency! Every minute counts!

You cannot tell whether you are having a stroke or a TIA. Only a doctor can tell the difference. If you are having a TIA, your doctor can identify and treat the causes. This may reduce your risk for future stroke. If you are having a stroke, emergency treatment could save your life and improve your chances for a good recovery.

Most strokes that follow a TIA occur soon after the TIA, so it is crucial that you get medical help right away.

Unfortunately, most people who have a TIA do not see a doctor because the symptoms are painless and go away quickly. If you have had a TIA, there’s a good chance you will have another TIA or a full-blown stroke. Remember, 80% of strokes are preventable. There are things you can do to reduce your risk of a stroke.

What causes a TIA?
Blood vessels carry blood throughout the body. When a blood vessel in the brain becomes blocked for a short period of time, the blood flow to that area of the brain slows or stops. This lack of blood (and oxygen) often leads to temporary symptoms such as slurred speech or blurry vision. TIA's are usually caused by one of three things:

- Low blood flow at a narrow part of a major artery carrying blood to the brain, such as the carotid artery
- A blood clot in another part of the body (such as the heart) breaks off, travels to the brain, and blocks a blood vessel in the brain
- Narrowing of a smaller blood vessel in the brain, blocking blood flow for a short period of time; usually caused by plaque (a fatty substance) buildup

How is a TIA diagnosed?
It is important to find out the cause of a TIA so that you and your doctor can develop a stroke prevention plan.

To determine the cause of a TIA, your doctor may run tests such as:

- blood tests to check for blood clotting problems
- tests that take x-rays or pictures of the brain to look for blockages or clots in the arteries and to measure how well blood moves through the vessels; these tests include ultrasound scanning and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) or a CT scan
- tests to find out if there are heart-related problems, such as an irregular heartbeat

How can a TIA be managed?
The goal of TIA management is to prevent a future stroke. The medicine and therapy used depends on the exact cause of the TIA. In addition to lifestyle changes such as diet and exercise, your doctor may recommend drugs to treat high blood pressure, high cholesterol or heart disease. These changes may reduce your risk of further TIA or stroke.

There are many medicines that help prevent blood clots from forming, reducing the risk of a full-blown stroke. Aspirin is the least expensive and most common of these medicines. Other drugs your doctor may consider include Warfarin (Coumadin™), Clopidogrel (Plavix®), and a combination of aspirin and extended-release dipyridamole (Aggrenox®). Some drug studies have also shown less stroke risk in patients taking perindopril erbumine (Aceon®) or perindopril with the diuretic indapamide.

If a TIA is caused by blockage in the main artery in the neck that supplies blood to the brain, called the carotid artery, surgeries may be required to open the artery and prevent a stroke. These procedures are known as endarterectomy and stenting.

Ask your doctor about the best stroke prevention options for you. Then take responsibility and enjoy a healthy lifestyle. The lifestyle adjustments -- such as eating healthy foods and quitting smoking -- you make today may reduce your stroke risk tomorrow.