Different Stroke Locations and Their Symptoms

The left side of the brain controls the right side of our body and visa versa.

So, when people suffer a left brain stroke, one of the tell-tale symptoms is paralysis of the right side of the body and the left side of the face. Other symptoms of a stroke on the left side of the brain include speech disruption, memory loss, and quick “inquisitive” behavior. According to neuropsychologist Paul Fedio, Ph.D., “with damage to the left brain, the right brain becomes over stimulated and runs out of control. The patient becomes anxious, pessimistic, and tense.”

In contrast, a stroke on the right side of the brain can result in paralysis of the left side of the body and the right side of the face, as well as problems with vision, memory loss, and a slow “cautious” behavior pattern caused by difficulties with awareness of things that are going on. In particular, spatial and perceptual abilities are impaired making it difficult to judge or to use hands to pick up an object, button a shirt or tie shoes. Frequent instruction and feedback may be needed to complete tasks.

Strokes can also occur, but less frequently, in the cerebellum where many of our reflexes and much of our balance and coordination are controlled. A cerebellar stroke can cause dizziness, nausea and vomiting.

Brain stem strokes are the most dangerous, as the brain stem controls all of our involuntary body functions—breathing, blood pressure and heartbeat. The brain stem also plays a role in vision, hearing and speech.

When a person suffers a stroke they require immediate medical care.

Early stroke symptoms can vary considerably in “range and severity”, but they always come on very suddenly. Warning signs may include some or all of the following symptoms:

- very severe headache
- confusion, disorientation or memory loss
- numbness, weakness or clumsiness of an arm, leg or side of the face
- abnormal or slurred speech
- loss of vision
- poor balance or lack of coordination.
According to the National Stroke Association, “Rapid and accurate diagnosis of the kind of stroke and the exact location of its damage is critical to successful treatment.”

If you suspect that you or a friend or loved one has suffered a stroke event, seek medical care immediately.

[SOURCES: American Stroke Association; Center for Neurological Disorders; www.medicalnewstoday.com; National Stroke Association]

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