



9 April 2025

Chair Schmidt, Vice Chair Deeter, Ranking Member Somani, and members of the House Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to support Senate Bill 20, which would establish the first week in May as Stroke Awareness Week in Ohio.

As some of you may already be aware, May is National Stroke Awareness Month. Stroke is a disease that affects the arteries leading to and within the brain and it is the No. 5 cause of death and a leading cause of disability in the United States.

We applaud Senators Antonio and Manning for their interest in creating awareness around stroke care in Ohio as well as the reintroduction of this legislation, officially recognizing the first week of May as Stroke Awareness Week in Ohio.

A stroke occurs when a blood vessel that carries oxygen and nutrients to the brain is either blocked by a clot or bursts (or ruptures). When that happens, part of the brain cannot get the blood (and oxygen) it needs, so it and brain cells die.

We want every Ohioan to be aware of, what we call, the F.A.S.T. warning signs...

- **F = Face Drooping** – Does one side of the face droop or is it numb? Ask the person to smile. Is the person's smile uneven?
- **A = Arm Weakness** – Is one arm weak or numb? Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?
- **S = Speech Difficulty** – Is speech slurred?
- **T = Time to call 911** – Time is brain

Stroke can be caused either by a clot obstructing the flow of blood to the brain (called an [ischemic stroke](#)) or by a blood vessel rupturing and preventing blood flow to the brain (called a [hemorrhagic stroke](#)). A TIA ([transient ischemic attack](#)), or "mini stroke", is caused by a temporary clot.

Ischemic Stroke (Clots)

Occurs when a blood vessel supplying blood to the brain is obstructed. It accounts for 87 % of all strokes.

Hemorrhagic Stroke (Bleeds)

Occurs when a weakened blood vessel ruptures. The two types of weakened blood vessels that usually cause hemorrhagic stroke are [aneurysms](#) and [arteriovenous malformations \(AVMs\)](#). The most common cause of hemorrhagic stroke is uncontrolled [high blood pressure](#).

TIA (Transient Ischemic Attack)

Called a mini-stroke, it's caused by a serious temporary clot. This is a warning sign stroke and should be taken seriously.

Cryptogenic Stroke

In most cases, a stroke is caused by a blood clot that blocks the flow of blood to the brain. In some instances, despite testing, the cause of a stroke can't be determined. This is called a cryptogenic stroke.

Brain Stem Stroke

When stroke occurs in the brain stem, it can affect both sides of the body and may leave someone in a 'locked-in' state. When a locked-in state occurs, the patient is generally unable to speak or move below the neck.

The brain is an extremely complex organ that controls various body functions. If a stroke occurs and blood flow can't reach the region that controls a particular body function, that part of the body won't work as it should.

If the stroke occurs toward the back of the brain, for instance, it's likely that some disability involving vision will result. The effects of a stroke depend primarily on the location of the obstruction and the extent of brain tissue affected.

The effects of a stroke depend on several factors, including the location of the obstruction and how much brain tissue is affected. However, because one side of the brain controls the opposite side of the body, a stroke affecting one side will result in neurological complications on the side of the body it affects.

Thank you for the opportunity to support Senate Bill 20. For more information on stroke signs, care, and recovery/rehabilitation, please visit www.stroke.org