



American Stroke Association®  
A division of the American Heart Association.

Together to End Stroke®

# DO YOU KNOW?

Infants and unborn babies can have a stroke.

**Perinatal stroke usually occurs between the middle of pregnancy and 1 month after birth.**



## WARNING SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

### NEWBORNS

- Seizures (repetitive twitching of face, arm or leg)
- Apnea (pause in breathing)
- Lethargy, poor feeding

#### WHAT TO DO:

Alert medical team/emergency services for possible signs of stroke.

### DEVELOPING BABIES

- Decreased movement or weakness on one side of the body
- Hand preference before age 1
- Developmental delays

#### WHAT TO DO:

Consult with your child's health care team, which may include a pediatric neurologist. An MRI of the brain is usually required.

**IF IT LOOKS OR FEELS LIKE A STROKE, IT MAY BE ONE.**

### RISK FACTORS

**The cause in most perinatal strokes remains unknown.**

Some factors that could lead to stroke include:



**Congenital heart disease**



**Disorders of the placenta**



**Acute blood-clotting disorders**



**Infections**

### FACTS TO KNOW

- **Less than 1%** of children who have a perinatal stroke **will have more strokes.**
- Recurrence in future pregnancies is **rare** (<1%).
- Perinatal stroke affects **about 1 in 1,000 to 1 in 3,000 children at birth.**
- **About 65% of children with perinatal stroke** will have permanent neurological disabilities. *These may include one-sided weakness (cerebral palsy), epilepsy, speech and language difficulties, visual impairments, learning and memory problems and behavior changes.*

Learn more at [stroke.org](https://stroke.org).

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**International Alliance**  
for **Pediatric Stroke**  
[iapediatricstroke.org](https://iapediatricstroke.org)

*The American Stroke Association and the International Alliance for Pediatric Stroke  
— collaborating to treat and beat stroke in infants and children.*