A stroke happens when the blood supply to part of the brain is interrupted.

There are two types of stroke:

A clot

- Some cells will recover

A bleed

- Some cells will be damaged or die
- Other cells may take over from damaged cells
How stroke affects you depends on:

• Which part of the brain has been damaged

• How severe the stroke was

• Age and general health before the stroke

Here are some of the most common effects:

• Weakness or paralysis down one side of the body

• Difficulty communicating – you may not be able to speak or understand

• Difficulty swallowing – you may be advised to avoid certain foods or drinks

• Concentration and memory problems
After your stroke you may be recovering:

In hospital
- You may need medical and nursing care or further tests

At home
- You may receive support from health professionals so that you continue to improve
Tests and Investigations

The doctor will arrange some tests to:

- Find out what caused your stroke
- Help decide what is the best treatment for you

People may have all or some of the following tests:

Scans

Blood tests

Chest X-ray
Starting to *move around* is important because it:

- Reduces your *risk* of blood clots
- Makes it *easier to eat and drink*
- Reduces your *risk* of developing *chest infections*
- Helps *prevent* your *arms and legs* becoming *stiff and sore*
How you may feel

- **Confused** about what is happening
- You have difficulty **remembering** information
- **Anxious** or **depressed**
- **Tired** more **easily**
- **Angry** or **frustrated**

You may find it **helpful** to have **someone** around to help with questions.
• **Take your medication regularly** as prescribed

• **Medication** can be provided in other forms if you have difficulty swallowing

You may be prescribed medications to thin your blood or prevent clots forming.

This will help to reduce your risks of further strokes.

• You may also be prescribed medication to reduce your blood pressure and lower cholesterol
Reducing your Risk

Stop smoking

Eat a **healthy diet**

Keep a **healthy weight**

Keep as **active** as you can

Drink **alcohol sensibly**
Planning to go home

Your therapist(s) may take you to do a home visit

Together you will see how well you can manage in your own home

You may require some equipment to help you at home
Help from Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland (CHSS)

Stroke Nurses provide support during the transition from hospital to home.

CHSS Community Stroke Services offers a range of Communication Support Services throughout Scotland for people with communication difficulties following stroke.

CHSS Advice Line is staffed by nurses and provides confidential, independent advice.

Phone: 0808 801 0899
(Free from landlines and mobiles)

Email: adviceline@chss.org.uk
There are two parts to this series:

Your Stroke Journey – Recovering in hospital
Your Stroke Journey – Recovering at home

This symbol-based education resource has been created using communication symbols and other images. It is designed for people who have aphasia.

The Picture Communication Symbols ©1981–2014 by Mayer-Johnson LLC. All Rights Reserved Worldwide. Used with permission. Boardmaker® is a trademark of Mayer-Johnson LLC.

August 2015