



# *What is a* **Stroke?**

An ischemic stroke (the most common type) happens when a blood vessel that feeds the brain gets blocked, usually from a blood clot. When the blood supply to a part of the brain is shut off, brain cells will die. The result is the inability to carry out normal brain functions such as walking or talking.

> About 85 percent of strokes are ischemic strokes.

## **How is a stroke related to your mouth?**

Studies have pointed to a relationship between periodontal disease and stroke. In one study that looked at the causal relationship of oral infection as a risk factor for stroke, people diagnosed with acute cerebrovascular ischemia were found more likely to have an oral infection when compared to those in the control group.

## **How can you minimize your risk of having a stroke?**

- > Control high blood pressure (hypertension).
- > Lower the amount of cholesterol and saturated fat in your diet.
- > Quit tobacco use.
- > Control diabetes.
- > Maintain a healthy weight.
- > Eat a diet rich in fruit and vegetables.
- > Exercise regularly.
- > Drink alcohol in moderation, if at all.
- > Treat obstructive sleep apnea, if present.
- > Avoid illicit drugs.

## **Resources**

<http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Caregiver>

<http://www.news-medical.net>

<http://www.perio.org/consumer/mbc.heart>

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/stroke>