What is Stroke?
A stroke happens when blood flow to the brain stops because it is blocked by a clot. The brain cells in the immediate area begin to die because they stop getting the oxygen and nutrients they need to function.

Stroke in Alaska
- Stroke was the 4th leading cause of death in Alaska in 2006.
- Stroke is also a leading cause of function impairments, with 15-30% being permanently disabled.
- Nearly 1/3 of Alaskans who have suffered a stroke report that their everyday activities have been limited because of that condition.

Stroke is an Emergency! Minutes count!!
Rapid emergency medical care gives a victim the best possible chance of stroke survival and reversal of brain damage. Certain stroke treatments can be administered no later than (approximately) 3 hours from the time the stroke begins.
That’s why it is critical:
1. Know the signs and symptoms of stroke so you can identify a stroke in yourself or someone else early.
2. If you or someone around you shows one or more signs of stroke, immediately call 9-1-1 or the emergency number in your area.

Signs of Stroke
Here are the signs to look out for:
- Sudden confusion or trouble speaking;
- Sudden numbness or weakness of face, arm, or leg; especially one side;
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes;
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, or loss of balance;
- Severe headache with no known cause.

Alaskans’ Awareness of Stroke Signs & Symptoms
- In 2002, Alaskan adults were asked to identify stroke signs and symptoms (see chart).
- 16% of Alaskan adults correctly identified all stroke signs and reported they would call 9-1-1 as a first response.

Percentage of Alaskans Who Correctly Identify Stroke Signs & Symptoms.
Alaska BRFSS (2002)

F.A.S.T stands for face, arms, speech and time, and is being used as an easy way for everyone to recognize the signs of stroke:

- Facial weakness - can the person smile? Has their mouth or eye drooped?
- Arm weakness - can the person raise both arms?
- Speech difficulty - can the person speak clearly and understand what you say?
- Time to act fast - call 9-1-1 immediately.

Recent data show that Anchorage bus rider awareness of stroke signs and symptoms increased significantly after F.A.S.T campaign signs were placed within Anchorage’s PeopleMover bus system.