

Ngā Mihi o te Aranga, and welcome to another edition of your Stroke Foundation newsletter! In this issue, we're going back to basics by looking at what is a stroke? You may have experienced a stroke yourself, or know someone who has had a stroke, but still not fully understand what happened and why.

Today you'll learn what happens in the brain that causes a stroke, see how knowing more about stroke can help you understand your experience better, and find out the best way you can manage your own risk of stroke.

What is a stroke?

A stroke is a brain attack. It happens when a blockage, like a clot, blocks the blood flow to the brain, or when a burst blood vessel bleeds into the brain.



Click above to watch a short video explanation of what a stroke is (courtesy of HealthSketch). (NB: in New Zealand, T stands for Take Action - call 111.)

During a stroke, the cells in the affected part of the brain start to die so that part of the brain stops being able to work properly. Different parts of the brain control a person's movements, senses, emotions and intellectual functions.

The effects of stroke depend on which part of the brain is damaged and how severe the damage is. Some people make a speedy recovery and return to their normal lives. Others have disabilities that may improve with time and can be managed.

[Learn more about stroke](#)



Ruby's story

Ruby was only 10 years old when she witnessed her mum, Paula, having a stroke.

So when Ruby needed to choose a topic for the science fair last year, she knew exactly what she wanted to do.

"I really wanted to know more about stroke, so I based my topic on that," she explains. "It helped me comprehend everything that's happened."

[Read more about Ruby and the science fair](#)

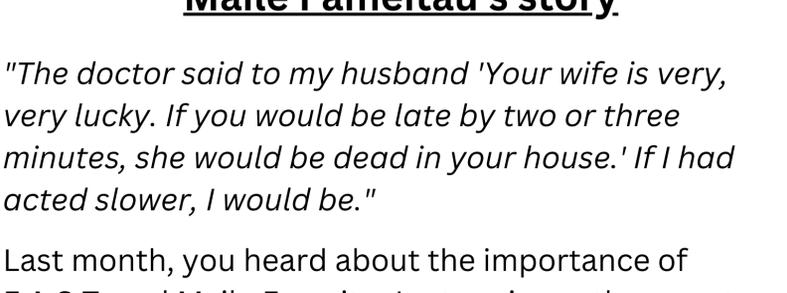
Your Challenge:

Get your blood pressure checked

Getting regular blood pressure checks can be your best defence against stroke.

Having high blood pressure puts too much pressure on the walls of blood vessels and increases your risk of both bleeds and blood clots. If you have high blood pressure, you are up to seven times more likely to have a stroke than someone with normal or low blood pressure. Lifestyle changes and medication can be used to manage high blood pressure and reduce your risk of stroke.

For most people, an annual blood pressure check is all you need, but you should talk with your doctor about how often is right for you.



Our mobile testing units provide blood pressure and pulse checks to the public.

It doesn't cost anything to visit and you don't have to book - just show up and we'll take your blood pressure for free!

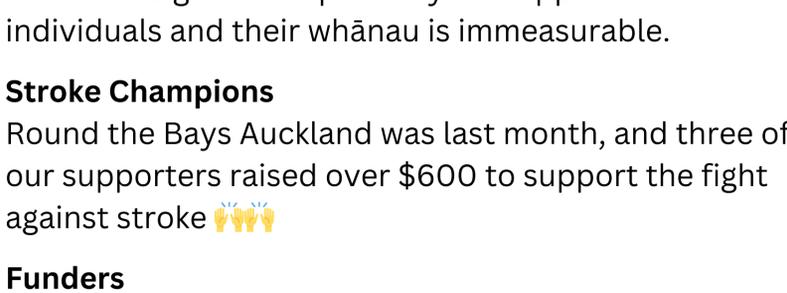
With your help we can continue to provide this service for free and reach more New Zealanders.

[See where it's headed next](#)

Maile Fameitau's story

"The doctor said to my husband 'Your wife is very, very lucky. If you would be late by two or three minutes, she would be dead in your house.' If I had acted slower, I would be."

Last month, you heard about the importance of F.A.S.T. and Maile Fameitau's story is another great reminder of what a difference thinking F.A.S.T. can make. You can read Maile's full story [on our website here](#), or you can watch her video by clicking the image below:



Are you supporting a stroke survivor?

The University of Otago is looking for adult family members of stroke survivors to review a booklet that provides tips for supporting physical activity in stroke survivors. A \$50 voucher is provided to acknowledge participation (one per family).

[Find out more](#)

Thank you

Every dollar counts in the fight against stroke. Your donations and grants mean that we can continue to offer stroke prevention and stroke recovery services free of charge. The impact of your support on individuals and their whānau is immeasurable.

Stroke Champions

Round the Bays Auckland was last month, and three of our supporters raised over \$600 to support the fight against stroke 🙌🙌🙌

Funders

We would like to acknowledge the following funders who supported us between November 2023 and January 2024:

- Trillian Trust
- Blue Sky Community Trust
- Redwood Trust
- Estate of Ernest Hyam Davis & The Ted and Mollie Carr Endowment Trust
- Whanganui Community Foundation
- Rano Community Trust
- Dragon Community Trust
- Pelorus Trust
- Trust House Foundation
- Rotorua Community Trust

Look out for next month's extra special edition and find out the cosiest way to save lives this winter.

Noho ora mai,

Jo Lambert
Chief Executive Officer | The Stroke Foundation of New Zealand