



**World  
PT Day  
2026**

# STROKE

**1/4** of us will have a stroke in our lifetime, but almost all strokes can be prevented



## What is a stroke?

A stroke happens when the blood supply to part of the brain is suddenly reduced or stopped. A stroke is a medical emergency and needs immediate treatment.



### Ischaemic stroke

caused by a blood clot blocking a blood vessel in the brain



### Haemorrhagic stroke

caused by a blood vessel in the brain bursting and bleeding



### Transient ischaemic attack (TIA)

a temporary blockage sometimes called a "mini stroke", this can be a warning sign of a future stroke

## How can physiotherapy help prevent a stroke?

Physiotherapists play an important role in reducing stroke risk, especially by supporting people to be more physically active and manage long term health conditions. **Just 30 minutes of exercise five times a week can reduce your risk of stroke by 25%.** Regular physical activity can reduce the risk of stroke, as well as lower the risk of having another stroke after a first one.

### Physiotherapists can help you to:



**increase regular physical activity**, which lowers blood pressure, improves cholesterol and blood sugar control, reduces body weight, and can help with managing depression and stress



**reduce the amount of time spent sitting**, and show you how to include small amounts of activity in your daily life



**recommend safe, tailored exercise** for people who may have other health conditions and find it hard to exercise



## How can physiotherapy help after a stroke?

**Rehabilitation is an important part of recovery after a stroke - it helps people get back to doing everyday activities, improves quality of life, and supports independence as much as possible.**

Rehabilitation usually starts within the first 48 hours, once the person is medically stable. Starting early can help recovery and confidence. Recovery from stroke will involve a healthcare team - as well as physiotherapists it may also include doctors, nurses, occupational therapists and speech pathologists. It is important that an individualised plan is developed for you.

**Physiotherapists play an important role in helping prevent another stroke. They work with people to make everyday lifestyle changes that can reduce the risk of a second stroke, support better health, and help avoid long term disability. National and international guidelines recommend regular, sufficiently intense physiotherapy as part of stroke care, tailored to the person's goals and abilities.**



## How is physiotherapy a core part of stroke rehabilitation?

After a stroke, many people experience problems with movement, balance, walking, using their arms, strength, fitness, fatigue, and independence. Physiotherapists are the exercise experts and can help people who have had a stroke to:

- improve **movement and strength** in arms and legs so you can get back to living independently and doing the things you enjoy
- learn how to **walk** again, and how walk further and faster
- improve **balance** to minimise risk of falling - 73% of stroke survivors fall in the first year post stroke
- improve **stiffness, pain, and muscle tightness**
- help you get **fitter** so that your heart and lungs work more efficiently
- improve your **mood**, decrease **fatigue**, and help fight **depression**
- practice **everyday activities** such as getting out of a chair, walking and talking at the same time, getting dressed, and using your arms to use items such as keys and taps

## How much exercise?

**Exercise-based physiotherapy has been shown to improve physical function, mobility, balance, and quality of life at all stages of recovery** - from hospital care to long term community rehabilitation. A physiotherapist can help you safely increase the amount of exercise you do to reach your goals. You can start small to reach these recommendations:



**moderate intensity aerobic exercise for at least 10 minutes 4 times per week**



**keep active throughout the day to reduce sitting time**



**6,500 to 8,500 steps daily**



**World  
Physiotherapy**

**#WorldPTDay**

**8 September**

[www.world.physio/wptday](http://www.world.physio/wptday)