

What you can do to help

There are many ways to cope, and they can be different for everyone. We encourage you to think of healthy coping tools you have used in the past.

You might want to try the following:

- ✓ Accept the emotions and feelings you are having as a normal response.
- ✓ Talk with someone you trust.
- ✓ Do activities that make you happy.
- ✓ Think of what you are grateful for each day.
- ✓ Find ways to laugh.
- ✓ Focus on your ability – what you **can** do rather than what you cannot do.
- ✓ Lean into your spirituality or faith. Connect with your spiritual or faith leader.
- ✓ Connect with other people who have had strokes.

If you have questions, please ask your health care provider.

To find more information go to:

The Heart and Stroke
Foundation of Canada –
Emotions and Feelings
[Heartandstroke.ca](https://heartandstroke.ca)

After Stroke BC
strokerecoverybc.ca

Stroke Engine – Depression
strokeengine.ca

After Stroke Canada
[Afterstroke.ca](https://afterstroke.ca)

Warmline Support:

1-888-540-6666

Call to connect with stroke survivors and caregivers.

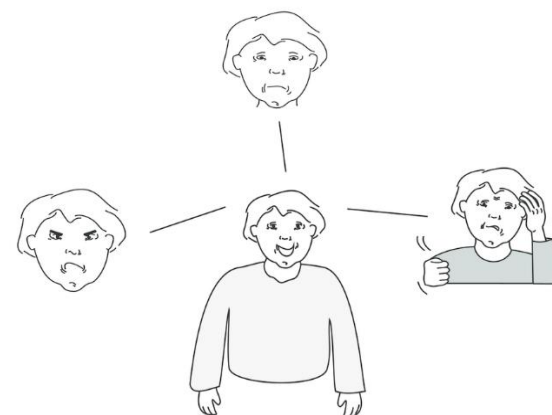
www.fraserhealth.ca

This information does not replace the advice given to you by your healthcare provider.

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For more copies: patienteduc@fraserhealth.ca

Coping with Emotional Changes

After a Stroke



Emotional changes after a stroke

Emotional lability

Sometimes after a stroke, your emotions might seem to come on for no reason and can be hard to control. We call this being ***emotionally labile***.

Anxiety, anger, frustration, depression, withdrawal, and reduced motivation for therapy or re-learning are all common emotions after a stroke. It is important to talk to your health care team if you are having these feelings.

Grief

Grief is a normal and natural emotional reaction to loss or change of any kind, including a stroke.

Everyone grieves differently. Grief can come in waves throughout your day.

Loss

Loss is the experience of having something taken from you. It is a common feeling after a stroke.

Loss can be in many forms:

- Loss of function or ability
- Loss of role in family or relationships
- Loss of job, social class, finances
- Loss of independence

Relationships

Relationships between friends, family, and spouses can change after a stroke. You might want to be alone, but it is best to get the help and comfort of others during your recovery. Your family might help you in many ways with your recovery.

Sexual intimacy might be affected after a stroke. Talk to your health care team if you have questions about sex and intimacy after a stroke.

Depression

People who have had a stroke have a higher chance of getting depression.

Physical signs of depression include the following:

- Changes in sleep pattern
- Changes in appetite
- Feeling tired
- Feeling restless

Emotional signs of depression include the following:

- Feeling sad, anxious, irritable, nervous, hopeless, worthless, or guilty
- Not feeling interested in doing things you used to enjoy
- Finding it hard to focus
- Thoughts of death

It is important to talk to your health care team about signs of depression. Ask for help if you have concerns for yourself or someone you care about.