

Stroke and Neuropsychology

What is a stroke?

Stroke is a neurological condition that occurs when the blood supply to the brain is interrupted, leading to damage to brain cells. This damage can result in a range of physical and cognitive symptoms, including cognitive difficulties.

There are two main types of stroke: ischemic stroke and hemorrhagic stroke.

An ischemic stroke occurs when a blood clot blocks a blood vessel in the brain, cutting off blood flow to that area of the brain. This can cause brain cells to die, leading to symptoms such as weakness, numbness, difficulty speaking or understanding speech, and vision problems. Ischemic strokes are the most common type, accounting for about 87% of all strokes.

A hemorrhagic stroke occurs when a blood vessel in the brain ruptures or leaks, causing bleeding into the brain. This can lead to symptoms such as sudden severe headache, nausea, vomiting, seizures, and loss of consciousness. Hemorrhagic strokes are less common but can be more severe than ischemic strokes.

It's important to note that the symptoms of stroke can vary depending on which part of the brain is affected, and some people may experience a transient ischemic attack (TIA), also known as a "mini-stroke," which is caused by a temporary disruption of blood flow to the brain. Regardless of the type of stroke, it is essential to seek medical attention immediately if any symptoms of stroke are present, as timely treatment can reduce the risk of long-term disability and improve outcomes.

Common Cognitive Difficulties After a Stroke

Cognitive difficulties after a stroke can include problems with attention, memory, language, and executive functioning. These problems can make it difficult for individuals to carry out daily activities, including work and social interactions.

A Clinical Neuropsychologist can help individuals who have experienced a stroke by assessing their cognitive functioning and identifying any deficits that may be impacting their daily life. They can also provide recommendations for cognitive rehabilitation strategies, including compensatory cognitive exercises and behavioural interventions, that can help individuals regain cognitive function.

In addition to cognitive rehabilitation, a psychologist can help individuals who have experienced a stroke by addressing any emotional or psychological difficulties that may arise as a result of the stroke. Stroke survivors may experience depression, anxiety, and adjustment difficulties, all of which can impact their quality of life. A psychologist can provide therapy and counselling to help individuals cope with these challenges and improve their overall well-being.

Hardwick Psychology Services has Neuropsychologists and Clinical Psychologists who are experienced in providing support following stroke. Individuals can self-refer for intervention or they could be referred through their insurance provider or can be referred by their treating team. Please feel free to contact our admin team on (07) 3515 0172 for further information.

