Location of Strokes
Left-brain vs. Right-brain Strokes

Effects of the stroke that you had are due to the site of the stroke in the brain. This can be talked about in different ways.
- Left-brain vs. right-brain strokes
- Brain lobe(s) or part involved (Health Facts for You # 5593)
- Blood vessel(s) involved (Health Facts for You #6846)

Left-brain vs. right-brain is a simple way of talking about your stroke. Your doctor can talk with you about your stroke in other ways (see HFFY #5593 and #6846).

Right-Brain Stroke → Affects the Left Side of the Body

- Trouble knowing how far or near an object is to the body.
- Neglect of left side of the body, or not able to see things to the left of the body.
- Poor decision making, lack of insight into the changes in ability since the stroke, leading to safety concerns.
- Impulsiveness
- Short attention span and slowed learning of new things.
- Facial weakness, unclear speech, or problems swallowing.

The right half (hemisphere) of the brain controls the movement of the left side of the body. A person with a right brain stroke may not be able to move the left side of the body (hemiplegia) or may be very weak in the left arm or leg (hemiparesis).

The right half of the brain controls judging distance, size, speed, and position. This may cause a person with a right brain stroke to misjudge distances leading to falls. The person may not be able to control the hand to pick up an object.
Survivors of right-brain strokes often have problems making good decisions. These patients often become impulsive. Persons with right brain stroke are often unaware of the changes that have happened to them. They believe they can do the same tasks as they did before the stroke.

People with right brain strokes may also have left-sided neglect. Due to visual field changes, left-sided neglect causes the person to “forget” or “ignore” objects or people on the left side. Some people with right brain strokes will have issues with short-term memory. Although the person may be able to tell you about an event that happened 20 years ago, they may not be able to tell you whom they spoke with that morning or what they had for breakfast.

**Left-Brain Stroke → Affects the Right Side of the Body**

- Trouble speaking or understanding words said or written (aphasia see HFFY #6678).
- Slow, careful movements.
- Not able to see things on the right side of the body.
- Facial weakness, unclear speech, or problems with swallowing.

The left half (hemisphere) of the brain controls the right side of the body. A person with a left brain stroke may not be able to move the right side of the body, (hemiplegia) or may be very weak in the right arm or leg (hemiparesis).

The left half of the brain controls speech and language for most people. Someone who has had a left brain stroke may also have trouble speaking or understanding what is being said to them (aphasia). Persons with left brain stroke often are slow and careful. It may take many verbal cues and a lot of extra time to get something done. Persons with left brain stroke may now have trouble remembering or learning new things.