Infants and unborn babies can have a stroke. Perinatal stroke usually occurs between the middle of pregnancy and 1 month after birth.

DO YOU KNOW?

WARNING SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

NEWBORNS

• Seizures (repetitive twitching of face, arm or leg)
• Apnea (pause in breathing)
• Lethargy, poor feeding

WHAT TO DO:
Alert medical team/emergency services for possible signs of stroke.

DEVELOPING BABIES

• Decreased movement or weakness on one side of the body
• Hand preference before age 1
• Developmental delays

WHAT TO DO:
Consult with your child’s health care team, which may include a pediatric neurologist. An MRI of the brain is usually required.

RISK FACTORS

The cause in most perinatal strokes remains unknown.

Some factors that could lead to stroke include:

- Congenital heart disease
- Disorders of the placenta
- Acute blood-clotting disorders
- Infections

Facts to know

• Less than 1% of children who have a perinatal stroke will have more strokes.
• Recurrence in future pregnancies is rare (<1%).
• Perinatal stroke affects about 1 in 1,000 to 1 in 3,000 children at birth.
• About 65% of children with perinatal stroke will have permanent neurological disabilities. These may include one-sided weakness (cerebral palsy), epilepsy, speech and language difficulties, visual impairments, learning and memory problems and behavior changes.

Learn more at stroke.org.

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