

# A portion of the aging population

[Sociology](#), [Population](#)



According to Kidwell and Warach (2003) cerebral vascular accident is a term that was used to referred to the loss brain functions arising from the problems in the blood vessels that supply the brain with oxygenated blood.

CVA can be caused by the ischemia or lack of enough blood supply to the brain due to a thrombosis, embolism or due to complications from hemorrhage.

The central nervous system is very critical to the body and therefore lack of blood supply is likely to affect the other parts of the body. Mostly it leads to the inability to move limbs on one side of the body, distorted speech and understanding, or visual impairment. Today, the term stroke is mostly used in reference to cardiovascular accident. The prevalence of the condition has shown that the aged population is at a higher risk compared to the rest of the population.

A disease of the aged

There are more than 500,000 cases of CVA in the United States recorded every year. This results to more than 150,300 deaths every year due to direct attack like stroke or due to other incapacitation and complications. More than thirty percent die in acute stage of the attack while about thirty to fourth percent are severely disabled.

Statistics also reveal that more than 50 percent of individuals who suffer their first CVA or stroke attack are more than 70 years old while ninety five percent of the all the attacks occurs to individuals who are more than 45 years of age.

Men, especially those above 65 years are 1.25 times more likely to suffer from CVA attack. However since women live longer than men, sixty percent of the case occurs in women since the risk increase with advancement in age. (Haase, 2006)

#### Causes and contributing factors

Cerebral vascular accident (CVA) is caused by an ischemic attack or hemorrhage complications which attack the brain tissues leading to infarction of brain tissue through interruption of the cerebral blood flow. An ischemic attack may last for not more than five minutes but it has permanent effects since it damages the neural tissues which are incapable of regeneration.

The pathophysiological progression of the condition shows that three groups of individuals are at a higher risk of suffering a CVA or stroke. The first group includes those with the transit neurological events. The second group includes those with the cardiac disease which increasingly predispose them to embolism and the third group comprise of those with asymptomatic carotid bruit which is a sign of vessel blockage. Mohr et al., (2004) argues that transit ischemic attacks serves as a warning sign which indicate that a stroke attack can occur at any one time.

This means that we can identify two prime causes as an embolism and a hemorrhagic attack. An embolism can be detached from the blood vessel wall, travel to the brain and block the vessel resulting to stroke. Hemorrhagic strokes are caused by tissue injuries which result to compression of the tissues. This is mainly from an expanding hematoma and can either distort

or injure tissues. The two most important risk factors are high blood pressure and arterial fibrillation.

High blood pressure or hypertension causes about thirty five to fifty percent of the all stroke cases. High blood pressure may lead to a detachment of embolism increasing the risk of blockage of CNS blood vessels. On the other hand, arterial fibrillation accounts for about five percent of all case of stroke.

Other minor risk factors include high amount of cholesterol in the blood which increase the risk for embolism, diabetesmellitus which increases the risk for hypertension and hyperlidimia, Anticoagulation drugs like warfarin which increase the risk for bleeding, surgical procedures and nutrition factors. (Mohr et al., 2004)