

# STROKE AND RELATIONSHIPS: GETTING THROUGH THE CHALLENGE AND REBUILDING TOGETHER

## Training for families and partners of stroke survivors

Supporting your loved one, protecting the relationship, and preventing recurrence without living in fear

<b>Duration</b> : 2 hours	<b>Modules</b> : 8 modules
<b>Lessons</b> : 32 lessons	<b>Audience</b> : Families and partners of stroke survivors
<b>Format</b> : 100% online, asynchronous	<b>Provider</b> : N° 11757351875
<b>Certification</b> : Qualiopi	<b>Price</b> : On request

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## Course description

This 2-hour training is designed for families and loved ones of people who have had a stroke. After a first stroke, the risk of recurrence is real, and the surrounding support plays a crucial role in prevention. This program provides families with concrete knowledge to recognize warning signs, ensure treatment adherence, adapt lifestyle habits, and react appropriately in emergencies. For partners, it also addresses the profound impact of stroke on the couple's relationship: role changes, intimacy, sexuality, and emotional balance. The goal is to become active participants in prevention and relationship preservation, without falling into anxious hypervigilance.

## Module summary

<b>MODULE 1</b>	Understanding the risk of recurrence	4 lessons
<b>MODULE 2</b>	Medication adherence	4 lessons
<b>MODULE 3</b>	Recognizing warning signs and reacting quickly	4 lessons
<b>MODULE 4</b>	Adapting life without living in fear	4 lessons
<b>MODULE 5</b>	What a stroke changes in the couple's relationship	4 lessons
<b>MODULE 6</b>	Sexuality and intimacy after a stroke	4 lessons
<b>MODULE 7</b>	Managing daily life as a couple without sacrificing everything	4 lessons
<b>MODULE 8</b>	Taking care of yourself as a caregiver	4 lessons

## Learning objectives

### Learning objectives

- Understand the risk factors for stroke recurrence and how to act on them
- Support medication adherence and home monitoring effectively
- Recognize stroke warning signs and apply the FAST protocol
- Adapt lifestyle habits together without imposing or living in constant anxiety
- Navigate the impact of stroke on the couple's relationship and intimacy
- Rebuild sexuality and closeness adapted to new realities
- Reorganize daily life as a couple while preserving personal space
- Take care of yourself as a caregiver spouse to sustain your role long-term

## General information

<b>Duration</b>	2 hours
<b>Target audience</b>	Families and partners of stroke survivors

<b>Prerequisites</b>	None
<b>Price</b>	On quote - VAT not applicable (article 261-4-4° of the French General Tax Code)
<b>Certification</b>	Qualiopi - Certificate of completion
<b>Training organization</b>	DYNSEO - Activity registration number: 11757351875

**Lesson 1 - Why the risk of a second stroke exists**

- Recurrence statistics within 5 years after first stroke
- Persistent risk factors: hypertension, atrial fibrillation, diabetes
- Higher-risk profiles and individual variations
- The real impact of secondary prevention

**Lesson 2 - Modifiable risk factors in daily life**

- Monitoring blood pressure at home and target goals
- Managing diabetes and recognizing warning signs
- Supporting changes in tobacco, alcohol, and physical activity without imposing
- Accessible dietary adjustments without strict dieting

**Lesson 3 - Non-modifiable risk factors to be aware of**

- Age, sex, and family history: unchangeable factors
- Atrial fibrillation: understanding this rhythm disorder
- Arterial stenoses and their monitoring
- How awareness helps understand medical follow-up

**Lesson 4 - Medical follow-up after a stroke — what the family needs to know**

- Essential consultations: neurologist, cardiologist, primary care physician
- Regular monitoring exams and their purpose
- Helping your loved one attend appointments
- Your role as observer: what to report during consultations

**Lesson 1 - Understanding the treatments prescribed after a stroke**

- Anticoagulants and antiplatelet agents: their preventive role
- Treatments for hypertension, cholesterol, and diabetes
- Dangers of stopping treatment even briefly
- Managing common side effects without discontinuing medication

**Lesson 2 - Helping your loved one take their medications regularly**

- Using pill organizers and reminder alarms
- Integrating medication into daily routines
- Simple rules for each treatment in case of missed doses
- When and how to alert the doctor about treatment refusal

**Lesson 3 - The interactions to monitor**

- Medications and supplements that interact with anticoagulants
- Diet and anticoagulants: vitamin K and alcohol considerations
- When to seek medical advice before taking other medications
- Preparing for consultations or hospitalizations while on anticoagulants

**Lesson 4 - Home monitoring — good practices**

- Measuring blood pressure at home: technique and interpretation
- Monitoring blood sugar for diabetic loved ones
- Keeping a tracking notebook for medical consultations
- Signs requiring immediate medical attention

**Lesson 1 - The FAST protocol — recognizing and applying it**

- F: Face — facial asymmetry and drooping mouth
- A: Arms — arm weakness on one side
- S: Speech — speech disturbance or incomprehensible words

- T: Time — call emergency services immediately

### Lesson 2 - Other warning signs to be aware of

- Sudden visual disturbance in one or both eyes
- Sudden severe unusual headache
- Sudden dizziness, loss of balance, or coordination problems
- Sudden confusion or brief loss of consciousness

### Lesson 3 - The TIA — the alert not to be ignored

- Definition of transient ischemic attack: temporary symptoms, lasting risk
- Why TIA is an emergency even when symptoms resolve
- Common mistake: waiting because symptoms have passed
- Correct action: call emergency services immediately

### Lesson 4 - What to do in the following minutes — emergency procedure

- Calling emergency services: what to say and staying calm
- What never to do: give aspirin without medical advice, leave alone
- Staying with your loved one until help arrives
- Preparing useful information: treatments, medical history, allergies

## MODULE 4

### Adapting life without living in fear

4 lessons

#### Lesson 1 - Finding the balance between vigilance and hypervigilance

- Difference between being attentive and living in constant anxiety
- How caregiver anxiety transfers to loved one and increases stress
- Defining clear alert thresholds for real concerns
- Accepting unavoidable uncertainty and what cannot be controlled

#### Lesson 2 - Adapting lifestyle hygiene together

- Cardioprotective diet: simple sustainable changes
- Adapted physical activity after stroke: recommendations and getting started
- Sleep and stress management as protective factors
- Making changes together rather than imposing them

#### Lesson 3 - Preparing your home and your surroundings

- Displaying emergency protocol: numbers and medication list
- Informing close individuals about warning signs and actions
- Preparing a medical emergency file
- Useful mobile applications: health records and medical alerts

#### Lesson 4 - Taking care of yourself to better protect your loved one

- Recognizing caregiver burnout and its warning signs
- Importance of maintaining your own health and well-being
- Finding respite and support resources
- Understanding that self-care enables better caregiving

## MODULE 5

### What a stroke changes in the couple's relationship

4 lessons

#### Lesson 1 - The impact of a stroke on the couple's dynamics

- Stroke as sudden disruption of relationship balance
- Shift from partner role to caregiver role
- How role reversal changes perception of self and other
- Why some couples grow closer and others drift apart

#### Lesson 2 - The loss of reciprocity — no longer being truly two

- What reciprocity means: mutual support, shared projects, listening
- When your loved one can no longer respond as before
- Feeling of loneliness together: the most painful form
- Maintaining real connection despite asymmetrical reciprocity

### Lesson 3 - The mourning of the previous relationship

- What is truly lost beyond physical abilities
- The concept of white mourning: grieving someone still present
- Why this mourning is legitimate and must be acknowledged
- Understanding mourning is not abandonment or lack of love

### Lesson 4 - Redefining the relationship without losing it

- Couple relationship can change form without ceasing to exist
- What remains possible: complicity, tenderness, adapted projects, humor
- What needs renegotiation: roles, responsibilities, expectations
- Building a new definition of 'us' adapted to new reality

## MODULE 6

### Sexuality and intimacy after a stroke

4 lessons

#### Lesson 1 - What a stroke changes physically and sexually

- Sequelae impacting sexuality: hemiplegia, fatigue, pain, sensory disorders
- Effects of medications on libido and sexual function
- Altered sensitivity in different body areas
- Why sexuality is rarely addressed and how to fill this gap

#### Lesson 2 - What a stroke changes on an emotional and psychological level

- Fear of triggering second stroke during sexual activity: reality check
- Modified body image and its impact on desire
- Partner ambivalence: desire, guilt, and feeling of taking advantage
- Post-stroke sexual disinhibition: understanding and managing appropriately

#### Lesson 3 - Rebuilding an adapted intimacy

- Intimacy beyond sexuality: rediscovering other forms of closeness
- Kind touch: massages, caresses, non-sexual physical contact
- Communicating about desire and boundaries when words are difficult
- Experimenting and adapting without pressure: permission to go at own pace

#### Lesson 4 - When to speak to a healthcare professional

- Which professionals to consult: doctor, sexologist
- How to approach the subject without embarrassment
- Available treatments and solutions for sexual function disorders
- Specialized associations and resources on sexuality and disability

## MODULE 7

### Managing daily life as a couple without sacrificing everything

4 lessons

#### Lesson 1 - Reorganize roles and responsibilities

- Identifying what your loved one can still do versus what needs redistribution
- Avoiding taking on everything: risks for you and recovery
- Negotiating new responsibilities with kindness
- Involving other family members or professionals to lighten load

#### Lesson 2 - Preserve spaces for both of you — and for each one

- Moments for two that are not caregiving: protecting them absolutely
- Your own spaces of freedom without guilt
- Maintaining shared activities adapted to new abilities
- Why total sacrifice is destructive for both partners

#### Lesson 3 - Communicating when it's difficult

- Talking to your loved one about your experience without hurting
- When your loved one cannot fully receive what you express
- Finding other expression spaces: therapist, journal, support group
- Why accumulated unspoken things eventually damage relationships

#### Lesson 4 - Financial tensions related to stroke

- Impact on couple's income: work stoppage, disability, early retirement
- Available financial aid and support programs
- Reorganizing couple's finances without conflicts
- Where to find advice: social workers, associations

## MODULE 8

## Taking care of yourself as a caregiver

4 lessons

### Lesson 1 - The caregiver spouse — an exhausting and underrecognized role

- Specificity of partner caregiver: 24/7 with no separation or distance
- Distinguishing partner caregiver exhaustion from other caregivers
- Feeling trapped between love, duty, and need for freedom
- Recognizing exhaustion is the first step to addressing it

### Lesson 2 - Your own emotions — naming them to go through them

- Anger towards loved one, illness, or life: normal emotion
- Resentment that settles in without self-care
- Shame of no longer loving 'like before' or wanting to leave
- These emotions do not make you a bad partner: they make you human

### Lesson 3 - Finding support and respite spaces

- Individual psychological support for caregiver spouses
- Support groups specifically for spouses of stroke survivors
- Respite options: day care, adapted stays, temporary accommodation
- Accepting external help without guilt enables endurance

### Lesson 4 - Thinking about your own future

- Your life should not stop at your loved one's stroke
- Maintaining your own projects, relationships, and ambitions is legitimate
- Anticipating future scenarios with clarity and realism
- Asking for help to plan: social workers, notaries, associations

## Teaching methods

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- Online self-paced learning
- Video lessons and practical exercises
- Downloadable resources and tracking tools
- Access to support materials and emergency protocols
- Certificate of completion upon finishing training