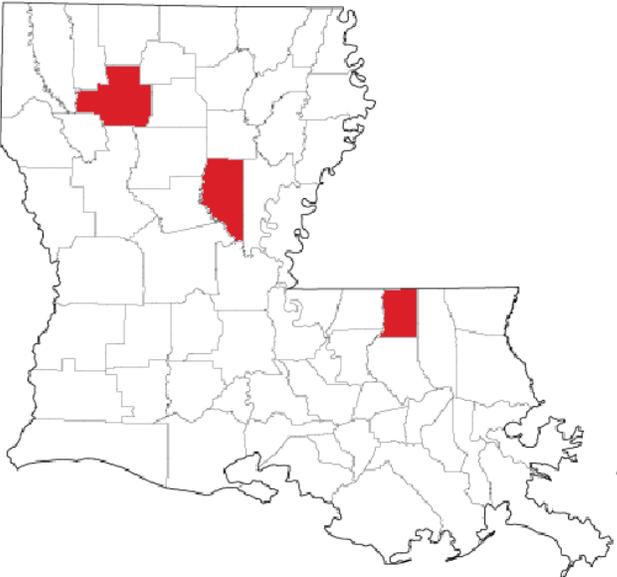


What if YOU knew that EVERYONE in Bienville, La Salle, and St. Helena Counties was going to have a life-threatening medical emergency this year...



leaving about 2,200 Louisianians dead and thousands more seriously disabled.

**WOULD YOU TRY TO DO SOMETHING TO HELP?**



**EVERY YEAR, there are about 39,000 reported cases of stroke in Louisiana, and 2,200 Louisianians lose their lives battling a stroke.**



## WHY SHOULD LOUISIANA LEGISLATORS BE CONCERNED?

**In Louisiana, the stroke death rate is 1.2 times the national average, and the state ranks seventh in stroke mortality in the United States. About 2,200 Louisianians die from stroke each year.**

**Stroke drains the economy.** In Louisiana, there are about 39,000 reported cases of stroke each year, with an annual price tag of \$250 million in medical expenses and \$350 million in lost productivity.

**Stroke care is insufficient and fragmented in Louisiana.** Without adequate treatment — within three hours of the first symptoms, stroke victims can suffer severe neurological damage or death.

**Awareness of stroke warning signs and the need for urgent care is dangerously low.** Only 11.5% of Louisianians are aware of all the correct symptoms of a stroke and the need to call 911.

**Many Louisianians have a ticking time bomb—inside them.** Two of the most common causes of stroke are high blood pressure and high cholesterol. Smoking doubles the risk for stroke. Over 32% of Louisianians have high blood pressure, nearly 34% have high cholesterol and over 22% smoke.

## WHAT CAN LOUISIANA LEGISLATORS DO?

**Advocate for a stroke system of care, including wireless, enhanced 911 coverage.** Coordinated stroke response and care gives stroke victims in Louisiana access to the most effective treatment.

**Support efforts to fund certified primary stroke centers.** Stroke centers are medical facilities staffed by health care professionals with specific training in rapidly diagnosing and treating strokes. **There are only five certified primary stroke centers in Louisiana.**

**Promote stroke awareness campaigns.** Awareness of stroke warning signs and the need to call 911 saves lives and reduces disability.

**Make healthy choices easier.** Support policies and programs that will help Louisianians make lifestyle and behavior changes to reduce their risk for stroke. 80% of strokes can be prevented.

**Extend insurance coverage.** Support policies that include health care coverage for chronic disease prevention, such as tobacco cessation and blood pressure and cholesterol screening, treatment and control.

**Support policies focused on Louisianians at high risk for stroke.** Implement programs focused on high-risk groups such as African-Americans, Hispanics, uninsured, low-income Louisianians, and the elderly.

## WHAT IS A STROKE?

**A stroke happens when the blood supply to the brain is cut off or when a blood vessel bursts. Without oxygen, brain cells begin to die and death or permanent disability can result.**

### The five warning signs of stroke are:

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm, or leg, especially on one side of the body;
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding;
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes;
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination;
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause.

**Stroke is an emergency.  
Call 911**