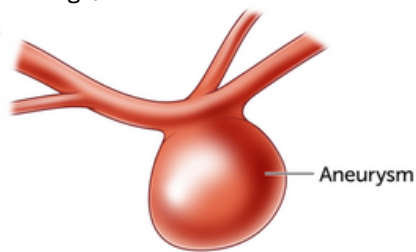


# Understanding brain aneurysms

## What is a brain aneurysm?

A brain aneurysm (or cerebral aneurysm) is a bulge or balloon on the wall of a brain artery. It is a common condition caused by a weakness in the artery wall.

An unruptured aneurysm often doesn't cause any symptoms. Many people live their whole lives without finding out that they have an unruptured aneurysm. However, they can be very dangerous if they rupture and cause bleeding in the brain (a type of stroke called a subarachnoid haemorrhage).



## Symptoms

Unruptured aneurysms might cause vague symptoms such as headache or dizziness. If you have a persistent or unusual headache it's always a good idea to see a doctor.

A ruptured aneurysm is a medical emergency. It causes immediate symptoms, such as a combination of the following symptoms:

- A sudden, severe headache
- Nausea and vomiting
- Neck stiffness
- Blurred or double vision
- Light sensitivity
- Seizures
- A drooping eyelid
- Loss of consciousness
- Confusion

If you or someone you're with starts experiencing symptoms of a ruptured aneurysm, **call 000 and seek medical assistance immediately.**

## Prevention

In many cases, aneurysms can't be prevented. However, there are a few risk factors that you can control to reduce the risk of rupture.

- Don't smoke or use recreational drugs
- Avoid heavy alcohol consumption
- Eat a healthy diet and exercise
- Control your blood pressure if you have high blood pressure

## Treatment

There are several options for treating both ruptured and unruptured aneurysms. These include:

- **Clipping.** A surgical procedure in which a neurosurgeon places a tiny metal clip on the neck of the aneurysm through an open brain surgery.
- **Endovascular procedures.** These are less invasive. The surgeon inserts a catheter into an artery through the leg and threads it through your body to the aneurysm. They then use a device to seal off the aneurysm. Devices include coils, stents, and flow diverters.

The type of treatment will depend on the size and location of the aneurysm, your ability to undergo a procedure, and other factors. This is because these procedures can be risky.

## Outlook

The outlook for people with cerebral aneurysms depends on a lot of different factors. On average only about 0.25% of aneurysms are estimated to end in rupture. However, if they do rupture, there is a serious risk of death or disability after the subarachnoid haemorrhage (SAH). The outlook after rupture depends on the size and location of the aneurysm, the person's age, general health, and neurological condition after haemorrhage.