



Mayo Clinic Minute: Who is at risk for a brain aneurysm?

Editor's note: September is National Brain Aneurysm Awareness Month

Brain aneurysms affect millions of people, with 6.7 million in the U.S. living with unruptured aneurysms. Globally, they can cause nearly 500,000 deaths annually.

Dr. Chris Fox, a Mayo Clinic neurosurgeon, says not all brain aneurysms need to be treated immediately. However, a brain aneurysm that bursts, or ruptures, causes a serious medical emergency. He explains who may be at higher risk for a brain aneurysm.

Video	Audio
	A brain aneurysm is a weak spot in a blood vessel that bulges out. If it bursts, it can cause dangerous bleeding within the brain.
	Mayo Clinic's Dr. Chris Fox says some people are at higher risk.
Chris Fox, M.D. Neurosurgery Mayo Clinic	"We think there's likely a genetic component, something that predisposes individuals to developing an aneurysm, and then perhaps a secondary injury to the blood vessel."
	Screening is recommended for those who have a close relative with a brain aneurysm.
	"That's usually done with an MRI of the blood vessels called an MRI angiogram."
	Along with genetics, there are other risk factors.
	"The most common things that can cause that are high blood pressure, hypertension, smoking and perhaps some other environmental factors."
	Certain drugs can raise blood pressure quickly.
	"Illegal, illicit drugs, like cocaine or methamphetamine, they can increase the risk of an aneurysm rupture."
	And that can be life-threatening, says Dr. Fox.
	"That's a neurosurgical emergency. We want to get the aneurysm taken care of and secured as soon as possible."
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Alex Osaidacz.