**What happens when a brain aneurysm ruptures?**

When it ruptures, blood spills ([hemorrhages](https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/14480-brain-bleed-hemorrhage-intracranial-hemorrhage)) into your surrounding brain tissue. The blood can put excess pressure on your brain tissue and make your brain swell. It usually causes a severe headache called a[thunderclap headache](https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/17876-thunderclap-headaches), in addition to other symptoms.

A ruptured brain aneurysm can cause serious health problems such as:

* [**Subarachnoid hemorrhage**](https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/17871-subarachnoid-hemorrhage-sah) **(SAH)**: Bleeding in the area between your brain and the thin tissues that cover and protect it (the arachnoid layer). About 90% of SAHs are due to ruptured brain aneurysms.
* [**Hemorrhagic stroke**](https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/23969-hemorrhagic-stroke): Bleeding in the space between your skull and brain.

This can result in permanent brain damage or other complications such as:

* **Vasospasm**: This happens when blood vessels get narrower or clamp down and less oxygen reaches your brain.
* [**Hydrocephalus**](https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/17334-hydrocephalus): This happens when a buildup of cerebrospinal fluid or blood around your brain puts increased pressure on it.
* [**Seizures**](https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/22789-seizure): A seizure is a temporary, uncontrolled surge of electrical activity in your brain. It can make brain damage due to a ruptured aneurysm worse.
* **Coma**: A state of prolonged unconsciousness. It can last days to weeks.
* [**Death**](https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/23144-what-happens-when-you-die): Ruptured brain aneurysms result in death in about 50% of cases.