Cerebral venous sinus thrombosis (CVST) occurs when a blood clot forms in the brain's venous sinuses. The clot keeps blood from draining out of the brain. As a result, blood cells may break and leak blood into the brain tissues. This causes a hemorrhage.

This chain of events is part of a stroke that can occur in adults and children. It can occur even in newborns and babies in the womb. A stroke can damage the brain and central nervous system. A stroke is serious and needs medical attention right away.

WHAT CAUSES CVST?
CVST is a rare form of stroke. It affects about 5 people in 1 million each year. The risk for this kind of stroke in newborns is greatest during the first month. Overall, about 3 out of 300,000 children and teens up to age 18 will have a stroke.

WHO IS AT RISK FOR CVST?
Children and adults have different risk factors for CVST.

Risk factors for children and infants include:
- Problems with the way their blood forms clots
- Sickle cell anemia
- Chronic hemolytic anemia
- Beta-thalassemia major
- Heart disease, which can be congenital or acquired
- Iron deficiency
- Certain infections
- Dehydration
- Head injury
- For newborns, a mother who had certain infections or a history of infertility

Risk factors for adults include:
- Pregnancy and the first few weeks after delivery
- Problems with blood clotting such as antiphospholipid syndrome, protein C and S deficiency, antithrombin III deficiency, lupus anticoagulant, anticardiolipin antibodies, or factor V Leiden mutation
- Cancer
- Estrogen-based medicine such as contraceptives
- Collagen vascular diseases such as lupus, granulomatosis with polyangiitis, and Behcet syndrome
- Obesity
- Low blood pressure in the brain (intracranial hypotension)
- Inflammatory bowel disease such as Crohn's disease or ulcerative colitis
- Very rare: Covid-19 adenovirus vaccines

If you have CVST, respond quickly to symptoms like headaches, blurry vision, fainting, or loss of consciousness, loss of control over movement in part of the body, seizures and coma.

If you have CVST, respond quickly to symptoms like headaches, blurry vision, fainting, losing control of a part of your body, seizures, and coma. Contact your health care professional if you have any questions or concerns.