

What's your reason for preventing stroke?



About stroke

Stroke happens when the blood supply to part of the brain is cut off. Without blood, brain cells can be damaged or die. This damage can have different effects depending on where it happens in the brain. It can affect a person's body, mobility and speech, as well as how they think and feel.

 **17M**
strokes

 **6.5M**
deaths

 **26M**
survivors

Stroke is a leading cause of death and disability globally. Stroke can happen to anyone at any age. It affects everyone: survivors, family and friends, workplaces and communities – but strokes are preventable. We all have a reason to prevent stroke – what's yours?



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STROKE IS PREVENTABLE

90% of strokes are linked to **10 key risk factors.**

If you have diabetes, heart problems or history of stroke/TIA talk to your doctor about stroke risk and preventive treatments. Here are some actions we can all take to reduce the risk of stroke.

KNOW THE RISKS

1. CONTROL HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

Hypertension is linked to almost half of all strokes. Knowing and controlling your blood pressure with lifestyle change, or medication will reduce your risk of stroke.

2. DO MODERATE EXERCISE 5 TIMES A WEEK

Over a third of all strokes happen to people who don't take regular exercise. Moderate exercise five times a week will reduce your risk of stroke.

3. EAT A HEALTHY, BALANCED DIET

Almost a quarter of strokes are linked to poor diet, in particular low consumption of fruit and vegetables. Eating five or more portions of fruit and vegetables will reduce your risk of stroke.

4. REDUCE YOUR CHOLESTEROL

More than 1 in 4 strokes are linked to high levels of 'bad' (LDL) cholesterol. Eating low saturated, non-hydrogenated fats instead of saturated fats will reduce your stroke risk. If you can't maintain a healthy cholesterol level with diet alone, talk to your doctor about treatments that could help.

5. MAINTAIN A HEALTHY BMI OR WAIST TO HIP RATIO

Almost 1 in 5 strokes are linked to obesity. A good way to know if you need to lose weight is to divide your waist measurement by your hip measurement. If the number is over 0.9 (man) and 0.85 (woman) your weight is putting you at higher risk of stroke and you would benefit from losing weight.

6. STOP SMOKING AND AVOID SECOND-HAND EXPOSURE

More than 1 in 10 strokes are linked to smoking. Stopping smoking will reduce your risk of stroke. Getting help to quit increases your chances of success.

7. REDUCE ALCOHOL INTAKE

Over 1 million strokes each year are linked to excessive alcohol consumption. Reducing our alcohol intake to two units of alcohol a day for men and one for women will help to reduce your stroke risk.

8. IDENTIFY AND TREAT ATRIAL FIBRILLATION

An irregular heartbeat or other heart condition is linked to 9% of strokes. Talk to your doctor about possible treatments to reduce your risk.

9. DIABETES

As well as sharing many of the same risk factors, diabetes increases the risk of stroke. Reducing your risk of diabetes will reduce your risk of stroke. If you have diabetes, talk to your doctor about treatments to reduce your risk of stroke.

10. INCOME AND EDUCATION

Across and within countries low levels of income education are linked to stroke. Government policies that address poverty and improve equitable access to healthcare and education will have a positive impact on stroke and other non-communicable diseases.



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What can you do to prevent stroke?

INDIVIDUALS

1. Find out more about your individual stroke risk using a clinically approved stroke risk assessment tool, such as the free WSO endorsed Stroke Riskometer app.
2. Get your blood pressure checked.
3. Talk to a healthcare practitioner about steps you can take to reduce your risk prevent stroke. Take steps to implement positive lifestyle changes and reduce your exposure to air pollution.
4. Get support. Talk to family and friends about your reasons for preventing stroke and identify ways you can help each other make positive lifestyle changes.

HEALTH PRACTITIONERS

1. Understand how medical conditions and behaviours impact on patient stroke risks. A third of strokes happen to patients with a history of stroke/TIA. Ensure patients with a history of stroke, or cardiovascular conditions are offered preventive treatment. Take steps to control hypertension and atrial fibrillation in your patients.
2. Offer blood pressure and pulse checks to your patients and communities.
3. Provide information and support to patients and communities and help them take steps that would reduce their lifetime risk of stroke.
4. Advocate for equitable access to healthcare and policies that promote community health.

GOVERNMENTS AND HEALTH CARE SYSTEM DECISION MAKERS

1. Implement population wide prevention strategies that address the economic, environmental and contributors to stroke.
2. Remove financial barriers to prevention screening and take a leadership role in developing sustainable, low cost risk assessment and management strategies.
3. Work in partnership with healthcare, researchers, stroke survivors and support organizations to develop and deliver effective national, regional and global stroke prevention strategies.

Corporate partners

The World Stroke Campaign has been made possible through the generous financial contribution of its corporate partners.

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NEURO PHARMA

About the World Stroke Organization

The World Stroke Organization's mission is to reduce the global impact of stroke through prevention, treatment and long-term care. We work to reduce the impact of stroke on individuals, their families, and their communities. Our members campaign together to increase awareness of stroke risk and to improve treatment and care. We believe that reducing the global impact of stroke makes the world a healthier place for everyone.



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