



**American
Stroke
Association.**
A division of the
American Heart Association.

let's talk about
STROKE



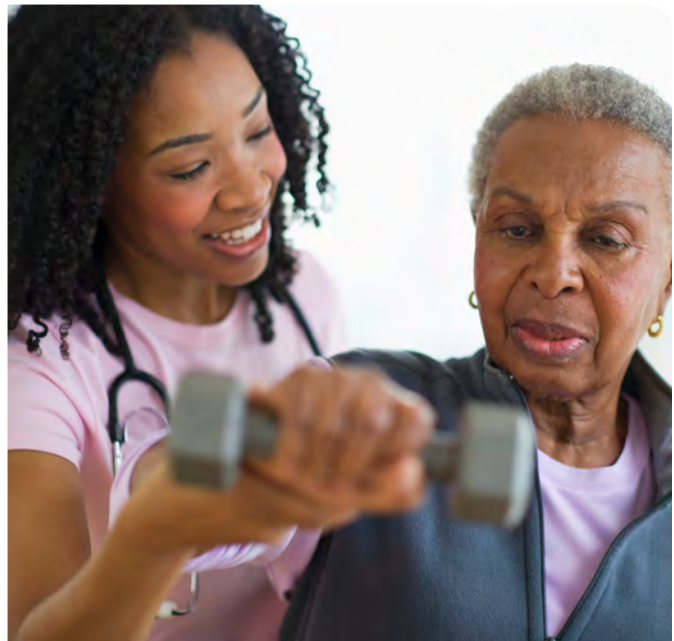
Prevention

let's talk about

Black Americans and Stroke

Black Americans have a higher prevalence of stroke and higher death rate from stroke than any other racial group. Stroke is a “brain attack” that most often occurs when blood that brings oxygen to your brain stops flowing and brain cells die.

Black stroke survivors are significantly less likely to be treated for many complications, including fatigue, spasticity and depression, compared with white stroke survivors.



How does stroke impact Black Americans?

Younger people (under 65 years) who have diabetes and have an ischemic stroke are more likely to be Black. Ischemic strokes are caused by a blockage in an artery; these account for about 87% of all strokes. Black stroke survivors are more likely to have difficulties doing daily activities. Also, Black stroke survivors are more likely than white stroke survivors to have a second stroke within a year and are more likely to die from that stroke.

Why are Black people at higher risk for stroke?

Not all the reasons are clear why Black people have an increased risk of stroke. We do know that there is a higher number of risk factors and societal challenges that may underlie new cases of stroke in Black Americans.

The experience of racism results in chronic discrimination, stress, and depression that adversely impacts Black Americans. Excessive stress can lead to long-lasting and cumulative damage to the body and brain, resulting in deteriorating health in early adulthood among Black populations.

Stroke risk factors in Black Americans include:

- **High blood pressure** — Over half of Black adults have high blood pressure. It develops earlier in Black people and is often more difficult to manage.
- **Overweight and obesity** — Almost 70% of black men and over 80% of black women are overweight or obese.
- **Diabetes** — African Americans are more likely to have diabetes than non-Hispanic whites.
- **Sickle cell anemia** — This common genetic disorder in African Americans is a risk factor for stroke.
- **High cholesterol** — Nearly 25% of Black people have high levels of “bad” LDL cholesterol.
- **Smoking** — Over 14% of black adults smoke, increasing their risk of stroke two- to fourfold.
- **Not exercising regularly** — On average, fewer than half of Black adults meet the weekly goal of at least 150 minutes of moderate activity or 75 minutes of vigorous activity (or a combination of both), which increases their stroke risk.
- **Stress** — African American adults face daily stressors that may increase risk for stroke.

(continued)



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Black Americans and Stroke

What stroke risk factors can I control?

Though some stroke risk factors such as age, gender, race, family history and previous stroke or transient ischemic attack (TIA) can't be controlled, up to 80% of strokes may be prevented by making lifestyle changes and managing your medical conditions.

Take these steps today to reduce your risk for stroke:

- Eat more fruits and vegetables.
- Reduce salt in your diet.
- Increase your physical activity.
- Quit smoking.
- Lose excess body weight.
- Manage stress.

Talk with your health care team about your specific risk factors and how to best manage them.

Stroke warning signs

Signs and symptoms of stroke can be different depending on what part of your brain is impacted, no matter your race. **F.A.S.T.** can help you recognize several common stroke symptoms and remember what to do.

Stroke is an emergency! Call 911 immediately if you see one or more signs of a stroke. Fast treatment can result in better outcomes.

SPOT A STROKE™ **F.A.S.T.**



FACE
Drooping



ARM
Weakness



SPEECH
Difficulty



TIME
to Call 911

HOW CAN I LEARN MORE?

- 1 Call 1-888-4-STROKE (1-888-478-7653) or visit stroke.org to learn more about stroke or find local support groups.
- 2 Sign up for the **Stroke Connection**, a free magazine for stroke survivors and caregivers, at StrokeConnection.org.
- 3 Connect with others sharing similar journeys with stroke by joining our Support Network at stroke.org/SupportNetwork.

Do you have questions for the doctor or nurse?

Take a few minutes to write down your questions for the next time you see your health care provider.

For example:

What medical conditions do I have that put me at higher risk for stroke?

How can I better manage my stress?

What is my risk for stroke?

MY QUESTIONS:

We have many other fact sheets to help you make healthier choices to reduce your risk, manage disease or care for a loved one. Visit stroke.org/LetsTalkAboutStroke to learn more.