

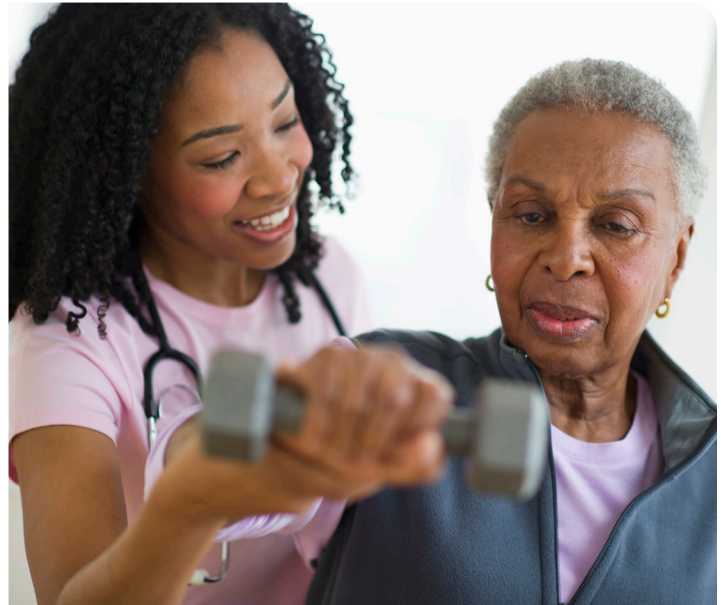


let's talk about

Black Americans and Stroke

Stroke — the fifth leading cause of death in America — is a “brain attack” that occurs when blood that brings oxygen to your brain stops flowing and brain cells die.

On average, someone in the United States has a stroke every 40 seconds.



How does stroke impact black Americans?

Black Americans have a higher prevalence of stroke and highest death rate from stroke than any other racial group. Those who have diabetes and have an ischemic stroke, which is caused by a clot, are more likely to be black. Also, black stroke survivors are more likely to be disabled and have difficulties doing daily activities.

Why are black individuals at higher risk for stroke?

Not all of the reasons are clear why African Americans have an increased risk of stroke. But over two-thirds of black Americans have at least one risk factor for stroke:

- **High blood pressure** – Over half of black adults have high blood pressure. It develops earlier in black Americans and is often more severe.
- **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.
- **High cholesterol** – Nearly 30% of black Americans have high levels of “bad” LDL cholesterol.
- **Sickle cell anemia** – This common genetic disorder in African Americans is a risk factor for stroke.
- **Smoking** – Over 15% of black adults smoke, doubling their risk of stroke.

- **Eating too much salt (sodium)** – Research shows that African Americans may have a gene that greatly increases sensitivity to salt and its effects.
- **Stress** – African American adults face daily stressors that may increase risk for stroke.

What 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 provider about your specific risk factors and how to best manage them.

(continued)



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

Black Americans and Stroke

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.

A study has shown that African Americans are more likely to think stroke symptoms are an emergency and to call 911.



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 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.