



Men's Risk of Stroke

Stroke is the fifth leading cause of death and long-term disability among men. In addition, men have strokes at younger ages than women.

Some risk factors for stroke, like age, race, and family history, can't be controlled. But you can make changes to lower your risk of stroke. Talk to your doctor about what you can do. Even if you're in perfect health, follow these suggestions:

- Control your blood pressure. Have your blood pressure checked often. If it is high, follow your doctor's advice to lower it. Treating high blood pressure lowers the risk of both stroke and heart disease.
- Stop smoking. Smoking increases your risk for stroke. It's never too late to quit.
- Control your cholesterol. If you have high cholesterol, work with your doctor to lower it. Cholesterol, a type of fat in the blood, can build up on the walls of your arteries. In time, this can block blood flow and lead to a stroke.

- Control your diabetes. Untreated diabetes can damage blood vessels and also leads to narrowed arteries and stroke. Follow your doctor's suggestions for keeping diabetes under control.
- Eat healthy foods. Eat foods that are low in cholesterol and saturated fats. Include a variety of fruits and vegetables every day.
- Exercise regularly. Try to make physical activity a part of your everyday life. Do things you like; for example, take a brisk walk, ride a bicycle, or go swimming. Talk with your healthcare provider if you haven't been exercising and you want to start a vigorous program or increase your physical activity. For more information on exercise and physical activity from the National Institute on Aging at NIH, visit the Go4Life website.

If you have had a stroke in the past, it's important to reduce your risk of a second stroke. Your brain helps you recover from a stroke by drawing on body systems that now do double duty. That means a second stroke can be twice as bad.

Source: *National Institute on Aging*
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