

Stroke: The REALITY

Awareness and Prevention



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Together, we can save lives

Thank you for bringing this important education to your community.

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Raise Awareness and Prevent Stroke



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Two videos: Two strategies

With these videos, you can answer the questions that will save lives:

Awareness

- What is stroke?
- How serious is it?
- How does stroke affect survivors —and their families?

Prevention

- How do you recognize stroke?
- Who's at risk?
- What can people do?



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What are we talking about when we talk about stroke?

Stroke is a “*Brain Attack*” – it occurs when the blood flow to the brain is blocked by a clot or a burst artery

It’s *common* – 7 million Americans have suffered a stroke. Anyone can be at risk, and stroke can strike any time



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How serious is it?

Stroke kills – 185,000 Americans die every year from stroke

Stroke causes brain damage – For each minute a stroke goes untreated and blood flow is blocked, a person loses about 1.9 million neurons.

Every minute lost can affect a person's speech, movement, memory, and more.



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What else?

It's *life-altering* – The impact of stroke on survivors and their families can be devastating emotionally, physically, financially, and mentally.

You do not want stroke to happen to you.



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The good news



80% of strokes can be prevented if you:

- Know your risk
- Manage your risk
- Reduce your risk



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CONTROLLABLE RISKS

There are stroke risk factors that you can take steps to change or manage



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Medical risks

High blood pressure

- Makes your heart pump harder forcing blood up against artery walls and increasing the chances of clots and bursts
- The most important risk factor to manage

Cholesterol

- A soft, waxy fat made by the body
- Build up of this plaque can block normal blood flow



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Medical risks

Diabetes

- People with diabetes often share the same risk factors as people who are at risk for stroke
- Having diabetes increases risk of stroke by 4 times!



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Atrial Fibrillation or AFib

- Upper two chambers of the heart beat rapidly and unpredictably
- Causes blood to pool and form clots that can be carried to the brain
- AFib increases risk of stroke by 5 times!



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Lifestyle risks

Being inactive

- People who don't exercise have an increased risk of stroke

Drinking excessively

- More than one drink a day for women and two drinks a day for men increases blood pressure

Eating poorly

- Not eating enough fruits and vegetables and eating too large of portions can increase the risk of stroke

Being overweight

- Excessive weight puts a strain on the entire circulatory system



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Lifestyle risks

Smoking

- Smoking causes the heart to work harder and makes it easier for clots to form
- Smoking doubles the risk of stroke



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UNCONTROLLABLE RISKS

There are stroke risk factors that you simply can't do anything about



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Uncontrollable risks

Age

- The older you are, the greater your risk – After age 55, stroke risk doubles every decade

Family history

- If someone in your family had a stroke, your risk is higher as well

Race

- African-Americans have twice the risk of stroke of Caucasians

Gender

- Each year women have more strokes than men, and each year, stroke kills twice as many women as breast cancer



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Uncontrollable risks

Previous stroke

- Stroke will recur in 24% of women who had a stroke, and 42% of men who had a stroke

Transient ischemic attack

- UP to 40% of people who experience a TIA are expected to have a stroke

Fibromuscular dysplasia

- This condition causes blood flow to the arteries to decrease, increasing the risk of stroke

Patent foramen ovale

- This “hole in the heart” makes the heart have to work harder, increasing the risk of stroke



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Bottom line: Control what you can

- **Know your numbers** – Work with your doctor to keep your blood pressure, cholesterol, body mass index, and blood sugar within healthy ranges
- **Stop smoking** – By any means necessary
- **Limit drinking** – One drink a day for women and two drinks a day for men
- **Exercise** – Get your heart rate up at least 2-3 times per week
- **Eat right** – Eating at least 5 daily servings of fruits and vegetables a day can reduce stroke risk by 30%!



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Why is controlling risk factors so important?

- Stroke occurs in the U.S. once every 40 seconds
- Stroke is the 4th leading cause of death in America
- It's the leading cause of long-term disability
- That disability can have a devastating effect on stroke survivors and their families for the rest of their lives
- Some stroke survivors say *they would have rather died* than to be left with severe disability and not be able to care for themselves

You do not want stroke to happen to you



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In the video, we meet Susan

- 53-year-old woman
- Wife and mother to two teens
- Loved gardening, reading, and playing the piano



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Susan's story

- Perhaps different from what we normally hear about
- Sudden severe headache and confusion
- Thought she was “getting sick”
- Came home from work early to rest, hoping to feel better

The REALITY: Susan suffered a stroke



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What stroke meant for Susan and her family

- No more activities she used to do – gardening, reading, or piano
- Weakness on her left side
- Vision problems
- Difficulty distinguishing distances
- Trouble speaking
- Fatigue
- Struggle to adapt to her new life and capabilities
- Loss of identity and resulting depression and anxiety
- Financial hardship from loss of Susan's income and post-stroke recovery



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What stroke can mean for anyone

- Nearly 800,000 Americans experience stroke every year
- Of those, 185,000 people die
- 2 out of every 3 stroke survivors will have some type of disability, which may include:
 - Garbled speech
 - Dragging feet
 - Loss of memory
 - Paralysis



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There are two types of stroke

Ischemic

- An artery in the brain is blocked, interrupting the flow of blood
- Account for 87% of strokes

Hemorrhagic

- A blood vessel in the brain bursts and blood spills into or around the brain



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The reality

- Both types can be deadly
- How well one recovers depends on the location, type, and severity of the stroke
- Stroke survivors often feel like they are victims and have a hard time embracing life after stroke
- Stroke turns survivors' and their families' lives upside down
- Caring for a stroke survivor at home can cause high levels of emotional, mental, and physical stress for the caregiver

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Awareness and prevention can help



- Know your risk
- Manage your risk
- Reduce your risk

Take charge before stroke happens

- Control your numbers – blood pressure, cholesterol, body mass index, and blood sugar
- Stop smoking
- Limit drinking
- Exercise
- Eat right



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Act FAST

Know how to recognize the signs of stroke FAST, so you can increase the chances of survival.

- **F** - Does one side of the **face** droop?
- **A** - Does one **arm** drift downward?
- **S** - Does **speech** slur or sound strange?
- **T** - Remember **time** and act fast – If you see any of these signs, call 9-1-1



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Share what you've learned today

80% of strokes can be prevented.

Awareness and prevention are critical.

You can reduce your risk.

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How can you help?

- We are working to reduce the incidence and impact of stroke through education and programs focused on prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and support
- Advocate, donate, participate
- Together, we can save lives!



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Discussion Guide

- Have you survived a stroke, or do you know someone who has?
- Was the stroke similar to Susan's experience?
 - If not, how was it different?
- How can you recognize stroke when it happens?
- Why is timing so important when responding to and treating stroke?
- What percentage of strokes can be prevented?



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Discussion Guide, Continued

- What is the FAST model, and why should we remember it?
- Who is most at risk of stroke?
- Which medical conditions should be treated in order to reduce the risk of stroke?
- What types of small changes can you implement in your life to reduce your risk for primary or secondary stroke?



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