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# ADULT HEALTH BULLETIN

OCTOBER 2010

## THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: STROKE

**E**very 40 seconds, someone in the United States has a stroke. Stroke is the 3rd leading cause of death in the United States. People of all ages and backgrounds can have a stroke.

### Common signs and symptoms of a stroke are:

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm, or leg
- Sudden confusion or trouble speaking or understanding others
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden dizziness, trouble walking, or loss of balance and coordination
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause

If you notice any signs or symptoms of a stroke – **CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY!** The chance of survival and recovery from a stroke is much greater if you receive immediate emergency service.

### Types of stroke

- **Ischemic stroke:** almost 85 percent of strokes are this type. During this type of stroke the blood flow to the brain is blocked.



It can be blocked by either blood clots or fatty deposits in the blood vessels.

- **Hemorrhagic stroke:** this happens when a blood vessel bursts in the brain. The blood can pool and put pressure on the brain.

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***If you notice any signs or symptoms of a stroke, call 9-1-1 immediately!***

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**Treatment for a stroke**

- **Emergency care:** if you get to a hospital with 3 hours of an ischemic stroke the healthcare provider may give a medication to break up blood clots. If it is a hemorrhagic stroke, the healthcare provider may have to do surgery to stop the bleeding.
- **Prevention of another stroke:** if you have had a stroke, you are at high risk for another. The healthcare provider may ask you to change your diet, exercise habits, or other lifestyle habits, as well as give you a prescription for medication.
- **Rehabilitation:** if you have had a stroke you will need to go through physical therapy to make sure you regain any skills you may have lost during your stroke.

**After you have had a stroke, you may still suffer from the following:**

- Paralysis on one side of your body
- Weakness on one side of your body
- Problems with thinking, awareness, learning, judgment, and memory
- Problems forming certain words or speech
- Difficulty expressing or controlling emotions
- Pain in hands or feet, especially with temperature changes
- Depression

**Stroke victims vary in race**

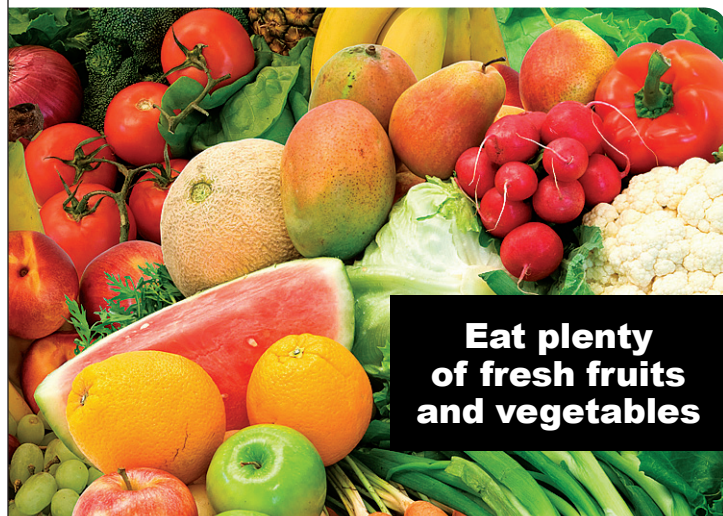
- African-Americans are almost twice as likely to have a stroke as caucasians.
- Both African-Americans and Hispanics are more likely to die after a stroke than caucasians.

**Stroke risk differs by age**

Although risk increases the older we get, nearly one in 25 strokes occur in someone who is under the age of 65.

**You can prevent a stroke by making healthy choices**

- Eat a healthy diet – eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables
- Maintain a healthy weight – if you are overweight or obese your chances of stroke are higher
- Be active – being active can help in managing your weight
- Do not smoke – cigarette smoking increases your chance of stroke
- Limit alcohol use – excessive amounts of alcohol increases blood pressure which can increase your chances for a stroke



**SOURCES:**

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:  
<http://www.cdc.gov/stroke/>
- National Stroke Association:  
<http://www.stroke.org>

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**Written by:** Nicole Peritore

**Edited by:** Connee Wheeler

**Designed by:** Rusty Manseau

**Stock images:** 123RF.com

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