



## Protect Yourself—Reduce Your Risks of Stroke



### Take 5 to Learn 5!

Most people are familiar with the word “stroke” and the devastating effects it can have on its victims.

Perhaps you, or someone you know, has been told about your risks of stroke. Perhaps you have been told how to combat those risks, but you’ve decided to forge ahead, thinking you’ll get serious tomorrow, knowing full-well that tomorrow never comes.

Protecting yourself against stroke doesn’t have to be overwhelming. In fact, making these **5** important changes in your life can help you live a healthier life and help reduce your risk of stroke:

- **Use up at least as many calories as you take in.** Start by knowing how many calories you should take in each day to maintain your weight. Don't eat or drink more calories than you burn in a day.
- **Eat a variety of nutritious foods from all the food groups.** You may be eating plenty, but your body may not be getting the nutrients it needs to be healthy. Be sure to include vegetables, fruits, whole-grain products and fat-free or low-fat dairy products in your daily diet.
- **Exercise each day.** Walk or do other physical activities for at least 30 minutes every day. If you miss a day, don't sweat it, but try to get back into the swing of things as soon as you can. But before you start an exercise program, be sure to check with your doctor.
- **Know your blood pressure.** High blood pressure may not have any symptoms. The only way you will know if your pressure is high is to check it.

- **Stop smoking.** While this may seem like a daunting task, it is one of the most important things you can do to improve your overall health. If you can't do it alone, ask a friend to join you in your commitment to stop smoking, and ask your doctor about a nicotine patch.

### Did You Know????

“*Give Me Five*” now has new meaning. **The Give Me Five Collaborative** is a joint campaign of the American Academy of Neurology, the American College of Emergency Physicians and the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association to increase awareness among Americans of stroke symptoms, to know when to call 9-1-1, and get to the emergency department. It's a simple stroke assessment to see if you need to seek emergency medical attention:

**WALK**—is balance off?

**TALK**—is speech slurred or face droopy?

**REACH**—is one side weak or numb?

**SEE**— is vision all or partly lost?

**FEEL**— is headache severe?



If any of these symptoms occur suddenly, call 911.

#### Sources:

American Stroke Association  
[www.strokeassociation.org](http://www.strokeassociation.org)

American Heart Association  
[www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org)

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