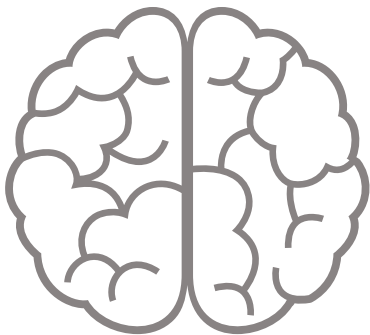




A MONTHLY HEALTHLETTER FROM THE WELLNESS COUNCIL OF AMERICA



DETECTING A SILENT STROKE

Did you know that you could have a stroke without even knowing it? These strokes are often referred to as “silent strokes”. Like a typical stroke, silent strokes cause brain damage and are caused by a loss of blood supply to the brain. However, with a silent stroke you may not have any clearly recognizable symptoms.

A brain scan performed by your doctor is the only way to determine if you’ve experienced a silent stroke. If you have a family history of stroke or notice that you’ve been experiencing unexplained memory, thinking and/or movement problems see your doctor to determine if you should be evaluated for stroke. A few silent strokes could lead to more severe strokes, so the sooner a condition is eliminated or diagnosed, the better your odds of preventing further damage.

STOP A *stroke*

A stroke is a sudden stop of blood supply to the brain. Sound frightening? That’s because it is. To be sure, in mere minutes a stroke could change your life, causing memory and cognitive loss and physical debilitation.

4 THINGS YOU CAN DO NOW

The good news is that you can do a lot to lower your chances of having a stroke or preventing another if you’ve already had one. Although you can’t control every factor that increases your odds (age, family history, gender) there are several key items you can keep in check to greatly reduce your chances of having a stroke.

1 Know your blood pressure and cholesterol levels. High blood pressure is a leading cause of stroke, so knowing your numbers is the first and perhaps most important step to help prevent a stroke. An optimal blood pressure is anything at or below 120/80 mm Hg. Talk and work with your doc if your blood pressure is not in this range.

High blood cholesterol also puts you at an increased risk for stroke. An ideal total cholesterol is less than 200mg/dL. Everyone over the age of 20 should have their cholesterol measured at least once every five years.

2 Do everything you can to quit smoking if you smoke. Research shows that cigarette smoking is another top risk factor for stroke. The nicotine, carbon monoxide and other chemicals in cigarettes damage your cardiovascular system, increasing the odds of stroke. Your doctor can prescribe treatments to help you quit.

3 Choose monosaturated fats over the saturated kind. Diets high in saturated and trans fats, which can be found in red meats, lard, cream and processed foods can raise blood cholesterol levels. Moderate amounts of monosaturated fats on the other hand can actually help keep your cholesterol in check and are found in vegetable oils, nuts, seeds and some fish.

4 Get moving. Something as simple as a daily brisk walk can decrease your risk. Try to get a total of at least 30 minutes of activity on most or all days.

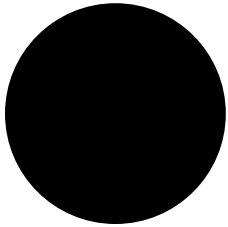
SEE "IGNITING YOUR BEST YOU!" FOR 16 STELLAR WAYS TO CUT YOUR RISK OF STROKE.



THE BEST EXERCISES YOU CAN EVER DO

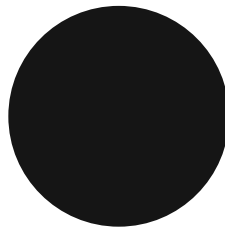
NO MATTER YOUR AGE OR FITNESS LEVEL!

workouts below. In addition to protecting you from disease, these moves will help keep your weight under control, increase and tone muscle, strengthen your bones, protect your joints and may even make you smarter!



WALKING.

Walking can be done anytime, anywhere. It's a low impact activity, meaning there's a very low chance that aWTTOMVRMLEPMPMITPJMVM□ however, are high—walking can help you maintain a healthy weight, improve cholesterol levels, strengthen bones, keep blood pressure in check and improve your mood. Aim for at least 30 minutes of walking a day (you can break this into multiple, smaller walks if you want). Keep in mind that the faster, farther and more frequently you walk PMOMIMPMJMVM□

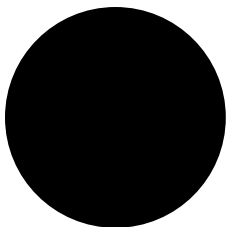


RESISTANCE TRAINING.

Any weight-bearing exercise, such as lifting free weights or using your own weight (i.e., push-ups, pull-ups) can help you build and maintain critical muscle mass. Light weight training will help you look sleek, not bulky. Moreover, weight training can help you torch more calories so it's easier to maintain your weight. Aim for 10 to 15 minutes of strength training a week.

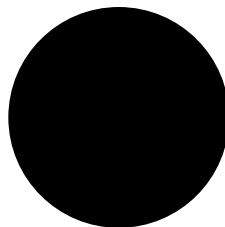
LIFT YOUR WAY TO A BETTER BRAIN?

Research published in *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise* found that resistance training increases blood flow to the brain and increases levels of a specific protein that protects and promotes the survival of brain neurons.



SWIMMING

Swimming is a fantastic workout and MMKITTaOMINāWzMNWU□ arthritis or are recovering from an injury to your knee, ankle or back. UUVOKIVUWMāWJMJTa□ and strength, build endurance and can help you build muscle mass (the water acts as a resistance force). It's two workouts (cardiovascular and resistance) built into one!



YOGA

There are several practices and variations of yoga, but all focus on bringing harmony to your mind, body and spirit through deep breathing and movement. A number of studies have shown that yoga can help reduce stress and anxiety. It can also enhance your mood and overall sense of well-being. If you're new to yoga, you may want to take a class or two to learn proper form and technique. AWKIVLKTIMāWIKITA5)PMITP□ club or community center.

EXERCISE OUTSIDE, HELP THE PLANET?

Some studies have shown that people have lower levels of cortisol (a stress hormone) after exercising outside as compared to getting activity inside. Researchers speculate that the exposure to sunlight, fresh air and natural surroundings can help improve mood and make exercise more enjoyable. And if you wanted another reason to get moving outdoors, consider this: you could be helping the environment. When you take a bike ride, walk or jog outside you are not utilizing any fossil fuels or energy sources as you would if you were working out in a gym. To be sure, operating gyms and all the equipment in them takes energy. Of course, if you prefer to exercise indoors or at a gym, by all means continue to do so, and don't let this be an obstacle to your workout. Just know that when or if you do exercise outside there is an added JMVMWNKWMVOMVMOa



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THE 4 BEST EXERCISES FOR ANY AGE AND FITNESS LEVEL

HOW TO SPOT THE TELLTALE SIGNS OF PARKINSON'S

DID YOU KNOW?

80 PERCENT

UP TO 80 PERCENT OF **STROKES** ARE PREVENTABLE BY WORKING TO MANAGE PERSONAL RISK.

14TH

COMPLICATIONS FROM **PARKINSON'S** DISEASE ARE THE 14TH LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH IN THE U.S.

10-15 MINUTES

AIM FOR **10 TO 15 MINUTES** OF STRENGTH TRAINING A WEEK.



Can You Spot a Stroke?

It's vitally important to know the signs of a stroke as immediate treatment can prove to be life-saving. A stroke is a medical emergency, and if you or someone you know shows any of the signs below you should call 9-1-1 and get to the hospital as quickly as you can.

- Sudden droopiness in the face (if the person can't smile or smile evenly, they may have just had a stroke.)
- Severe numbness or weakness in one arm or leg
- Slurred speech, or saying things that don't make any sense
- Abrupt loss of vision, strength and/or balance
- Brief loss of consciousness
- Unexplained dizziness or sudden falls

Remember, it's important to seek immediate medical attention if you or someone you know experiences any of these symptoms (even if they go away).

WHAT'S IN A NUMBER?



30 MINUTES

30 minutes of physical activity a day like walking can help keep your weight, blood pressure and cholesterol levels in check, and thereby reduce your odds of having a stroke later in life.



30 MINUTES

The amount of time it could take to do normal, routine activities that once took seconds or a few minutes (like getting dressed or going up a flight of stairs) if you've suffered a serious stroke. Some strokes can hinder or completely take away your mobility.