



Wellness Buddy Tip

Providing guidance and support to make the "healthy choice the easy choice."

Chronic Disease Health Promotion and Education Program
Jackson County Health Department

May is American Stroke Month Women's Hidden Risks

Stroke affects people of all ages, ethnicities and backgrounds.

Stroke is our nation's No. 3 killer and a leading cause of serious, long-term disability.

Stroke takes an economic serious toll in the United States.

- Stroke will cost our nation an estimated \$73.6 billion in 2010 (medical costs, lost productivity, etc.).
Some people have a higher risk of stroke.
- About 55,000 more women than men suffer stroke each year.
- Blacks have almost twice the risk of a first-ever stroke compared to whites.
- People with high-blood pressure (140/90+) have about twice the risk of stroke as people with blood pressure as people with blood pressure under 120/80.
- The incidence of stroke is about 2-3 times higher for people with physical disabilities and 20 times higher for people with cognitive disabilities.

Stop heart disease and stroke before they start.



(2006 Medical Expenditure Panel Survey)

This year, about 480,000 U.S. women will have a stroke.

Stroke is not a geriatric disease. And it's not confined to elderly, overweight smokers who have high blood pressure or high cholesterol.

Those are the most common risk factors, but strokes can affect anyone at any age. Other risk factors that are especially important for women under 55 include:

Migraines

Women who have migraine headaches with aura (visual disturbances such as flashing dots or blind spots) can be up to 10 times more likely to have a stroke, depending on other risk factors.

Birth Control Pills

Women who take even a low-estrogen birth control

pill may be twice as likely to have a stroke than those who don't and the risk may increase if other risk factors are present.

Hormone Replacement Therapy

Women who take hormone replacement therapy may have a slightly increased stroke risk.

Diabetes and Lupus

Diabetes and Lupus and other autoimmune diseases can increase the risk of stroke.

Clotting Disorders

Women who've had more than one miscarriage may be at higher risk for blood clots, which can increase their risk of stroke. Other signs of possible clotting disorder can include a previous history of clots in the legs (deep vein thrombosis) and livedo reticularis, a mottled purplish discoloration of the skin.

This information has been provided by the American Heart Association.

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Special points of interest:

Know these warning signs of stroke and teach them to others.

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



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