

Prevention through Wellness

Stroke prevention education provides instruction about healthy behavior. “This is what you do to prevent stroke.” However, education is only the first step because stroke can only be prevented after certain behaviors have been completed.



Blood Pressure Screening

Patients are often asked how they want to receive health education; in writing, with media or in person. A friend said “I’d like to have it IV.” He was joking, but it is true that health education can be passive, and to be effective, action is also needed.

Fortunately, the steps we must take to protect ourselves are well-understood and straight-forward. It is also motivating to know that these steps prevent other illnesses such as heart disease and diabetes.

To a large extent, stroke and other illness are caused by unhealthy lifestyle, neglected health risk factors, and medical conditions that can be corrected. All of these respond to healthy behaviors: Maintain blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar at healthy levels; eat a Mediterranean diet which is low in saturated fats, and includes fruits, vegetables, complex carbohydrates and olive oil; exercise moderately daily; maintain a healthy body weight; don’t smoke and reduce alcohol intake, and get to basic medical care.

Here are steps to better health:

- Understand the importance of self-care
- Know what to do to protect our health
- Understand our personal risk factors
- Value ourselves enough to take action
- Practice self-care and wellness behaviors
- Accept that behaviors need to be done regularly
- Fit self-care into our daily routine
- Seek and receive social and professional support

Optimal prevention services are more than education and include empowerment and actual practice over time to accomplish lifestyle changes, exercise, nutrition, attention to risk factors and basic medical care. Please join others in behaviors that prevent stroke and other illnesses.



Universal Wellness Practice

Why does the Stroke Association emphasize universal wellness? Seventy percent of strokes can be prevented by healthy lifestyle, attention to risk factors, and basic medical care. These actions also protect against heart disease, diabetes, and other illnesses.

The National Stroke Association, American Heart Association, the American Cancer Society, and the American Diabetes Association all recommend the same behaviors for wellness and disease prevention.

To practice means to repeat a behavior to achieve a goal, and also to work in a profession that requires extensive education and experience. SASC encourages regular practice of universally healthy behaviors with the support of health professionals and organizations.

The Stroke Association supports regular practice of universally healthy behaviors and encourages those who want to protect their health to join with others to achieve personal health goals.

- Form a wellness team at home, work, church, school or in your neighborhood for to learn and practice the behaviors of self-care
- Make your home a “good food zone” and make healthy choices when dining out
- Exercise regularly and safely, selecting activities you enjoy, according to your health needs, and with your doctor’s approval
- Reduce unhealthy demands and stresses of your personal and work life
- Access the healthcare you need and work with your doctor for good health
- Manage health risk factors such as high blood pressure, cholesterol, heart conditions and diabetes
- Know how to recognize and respond to medical emergencies

We all need encouragement and support. It’s not easy to regularly eat well, exercise, maintain weight, manage stress and health risks, stop smoking, moderate drinking, go to the doctor and care for our families while under pressure of personal and work responsibilities, especially when fast foods and other short cuts that bypass healthy behaviors are so accessible.

**While there are some healthy behaviors no one else can do for us,
self-care is easier, more effective and enjoyable when done
with others who are also committed to good health.
Join with others and form a wellness team.**