

10 WAYS

TO REDUCE STROKE RISK

About 795,000 Americans suffer a stroke each year. Strokes happen when the brain doesn't get enough blood, either because an artery burst or a clot is blocking the blood flow.

Prevention is key

The best way to treat stroke is to avoid having one altogether, which means you need to manage your risk factors.

Some risk factors, such as getting older and having a family history of stroke, can't be changed. But up to 80 percent of strokes can be prevented.



1 | LOWER YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE

High blood pressure is a leading cause of stroke. Almost half of all adults have high blood pressure. Get yours checked regularly.



2 | MANAGE YOUR DIABETES

High blood sugar damages blood vessels and nerves that control your heart. People with diabetes have two to four times the stroke risk compared with those without the disease. Work with your doctor to manage your blood glucose.



3 | MANAGE YOUR HEART DISEASE

Coronary artery disease or an irregular heartbeat could contribute to stroke. To treat your condition, your doctor might recommend surgery or medication.



4 | LOWER YOUR CHOLESTEROL

When you take in more cholesterol than your body can use, it builds up, clogging arteries — including those in your brain. Have your cholesterol checked at least once every five years.



5 | MAINTAIN A HEALTHY WEIGHT

Being overweight or obese increases your risk for stroke. Obesity is linked to high cholesterol and blood pressure. To maintain a healthy weight, balance the number of calories you eat with your physical activity level.



6 | EAT HEALTHY

Choosing healthy foods can help prevent stroke. Eat foods that are low in saturated fats, trans fat and cholesterol. Limit salt and get plenty of fiber. And load up on fruits and vegetables.



WHAT'S YOUR STROKE RISK?

Find out by taking the OSF HealthCare Stroke Risk Assessment at osf.healthcare/stroke-risk.



7 | EXERCISE

Working out helps you stay at a healthy weight and can lower your cholesterol and blood pressure. Aim for 30 minutes a day, five days a week. Even 10 minutes offers health benefits.



8 | QUIT SMOKING

Cigarette smoking can damage heart and blood vessels, which increases your risk for stroke. Nicotine also raises blood pressure. Kick the habit and your stroke risk drops.



9 | AVOID DRINKING ALCOHOL

Drinking too much alcohol can raise your blood pressure. Limit alcohol to one drink per day for women or two for men.



10 | MANAGE YOUR STRESS

Stress can contribute to high blood pressure. To calm down, try positive self-talk. Don't think, "I can't do this." Tell yourself, "I'll do the best I can."

GOOD EATS



ROASTED BEET SALAD

Enjoy this rustic beet salad with a sweet and tangy vinaigrette.

Ingredients

- 6 medium beets
- ½ cup walnuts
- 6 cups torn greens, washed
- 4 ounces goat cheese
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons orange juice
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- ½ teaspoon Dijon mustard
- ⅛ teaspoon onion powder
- 1 dash garlic powder
- 1 dash cayenne
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions

- Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Wash beets, and while still wet, wrap individually in foil. Place on baking sheet. Cook until easily pierced with a knife, 60 to 90 minutes. Once beets have cooled, remove foil and rub off skin. Cut into chunks.
- Cook walnuts in a dry skillet over medium heat, 3 to 5 minutes.
- Place greens in a large bowl; add the walnuts and beets.
- Combine remaining ingredients in a jar, screw on the lid and shake to combine.
- Pour dressing onto salad and toss to coat. Crumble goat cheese on top, and serve.

Serves four. Nutrition information per serving: 288 calories, 2 g total fat, 5 g saturated fat, 202 mg sodium, 22 g total carbohydrates, 6 g dietary fiber, 15 g sugars, 10 g protein



THERE'S MORE!

For additional healthy recipes, visit osf.healthcare/recipes.