

# "I am Woman"

Stroke affects me.  
Stroke affects everyone.



- 17 million people experience stroke each year.
- 6 million of those strokes will be fatal.
- 60% of those who die will be women.
- Half of those strokes could be prevented.

Behind these Facts are **Real Lives.**



**World Stroke**  
Organization



## Why women?

This year the World Stroke Campaign is focused on women. This is because a woman is

- more at risk of having a stroke.
- more likely to die from a stroke than a man.
- less likely to receive acute care and rehabilitation than a man, even though she responds equally well to treatment.
- more likely than men to experience hypertension, atrial fibrillation (irregular heartbeat), diabetes, depression and obesity, all of which increase stroke risk.
- more likely to take on the caregiving role.

Some stroke risks are also specific to women. Pregnancy related diabetes, preeclampsia, the use of birth control pills, hormone replacement therapy and hormonal change all increase the risk of stroke for women.

**Show you care** about the women in your life and ask them to have a health check to avoid preventable stroke and cardiovascular disease.

## What is a stroke?

Stroke happens when the blood supply to part of your brain is cut off. Without blood your brain cells can be damaged or die. This damage can have different effects, depending on where it happens in your brain, it can affect your body and mobility, your speech as well as how you think and feel. Stroke is the leading cause of disability globally.



***“I was lucky enough to be married to Sam and he knew FAST. He knew something was wrong and he got me to hospital quickly. I am just thankful I am alive.”***

***Erin Benjamin***

# Know your risks

## 1 Make healthy lifestyle choices

You can play your part in preventing stroke by making basic lifestyle changes and knowing your risk factors.

- Eat healthily
- Stay active
- Control your weight
- Stop smoking
- Moderate your alcohol consumption
- Reduce stress

Taking these basic steps will not only reduce your stroke risk, they will also reduce your risk for heart disease, cancer and dementia.

## 2 Get treatment for conditions that increase your risk of stroke

- high blood pressure
- atrial fibrillation (irregular heartbeat)
- diabetes
- Transient ischemic attack (mini-stroke)
- obesity
- depression

Talk to your doctor and ask for a stroke risk assessment, this will help identify and manage any health conditions that increase your risk for stroke. If you have high blood pressure, atrial fibrillation, or have had a TIA, it is very likely you will be prescribed medication to reduce your stroke risk.

# Know the signs

Knowing the signs of stroke and getting treatment quickly saves lives and improves recovery. If you think someone may have had a stroke, do this **FAST** check.

- F** **Face**  
is one side drooping?
- A** **Arms**  
raise both arms, is one side weak?
- S** **Speech**  
is the person able to speak?  
Are words jumbled or slurred?
- T** **Time**  
act quickly and seek emergency medical attention immediately.



*“I did not present any elements of risk to have a stroke. Yet it did happen to me. I am now very vigilant to maintain my cholesterol level, my weight and cardiovascular fitness. I want people to be aware (of stroke), should I or anyone they know manifest any one of the FAST symptoms alert the ambulance.”*

*Lillian Wong*



*“I was at work when I had my stroke. It was a strange feeling... tingling started down my left side. My face dropped and my speech slurred. I knew that what was happening and it was serious. I was very lucky. The girls in the shop next to me recognised something wasn't right and she called an ambulance straight away.”*

*Allison Armstrong*

## About the World Stroke Organization

World Stroke Organization's mission is to reduce the global burden of stroke through prevention, treatment and long-term care. We work to reduce the impact of stroke on individuals, their families and their communities. Our members campaign together to increase awareness of stroke risk and to improve treatment and care.

**We believe that reducing the global burden of stroke makes the world a healthier place for everyone. Find out more and join the campaign at [www.worldstrokecampaign.org](http://www.worldstrokecampaign.org)**

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