



# HEART & HEADLINES



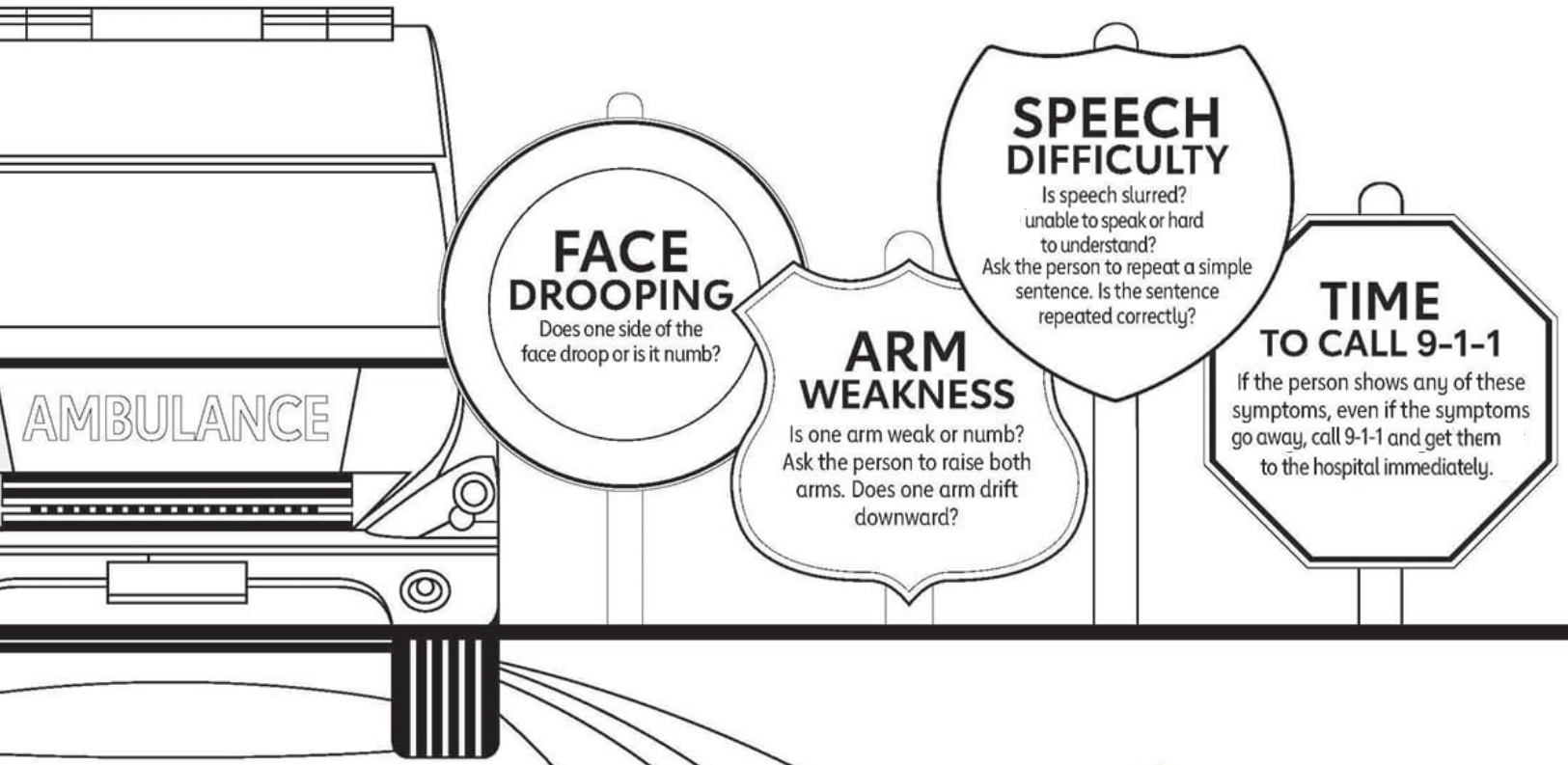
American Heart Association Eastern States Youth Market

May 2023

## May is American Stroke Month

SPOT A STROKE F.A.S.T.

[Stroke.org/warningsigns](https://stroke.org/warningsigns)



**Strokes can happen to anyone, at any age.**

*Read more about stroke prevention and warning signs in this month's newsletter.*

**Live Fierce. Be Well. in New York City is sponsored by:**

Please visit [this link](#) for additional resources and information.



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COLUMBIA | Well Cornell Medicine



## WHAT IS STROKE?

A stroke occurs when the flow of oxygen to a part of the brain is blocked. Without oxygen, brain cells start to die within a few minutes.

USE THE LETTERS **F-A-S-T**

to **SPOT THE SUDDEN SIGNS OF STROKE** and know when to **CALL 911**.



**F**  
FACE DROOPING



**A**  
ARM WEAKNESS



**S**  
SPEECH DIFFICULTY



**T**  
TIME TO CALL 911

## FACTS:

- In the United States, every 40 seconds, someone has a stroke; nearly 800,000 people in the U.S. have a stroke every year, and around 130,000 of them die from it.
- Stroke is the fifth-leading cause of death and a leading cause of serious, long-term disability in the U.S., despite stroke being largely preventable, treatable and beatable.
- Globally, about one in four adults over the age of 25 will have a stroke in their lifetime.
- Even though some people are at higher risk for stroke, like stroke survivors and people with unmanaged AFib or high blood pressure, anyone can have a stroke at any time.
- Recognizing the stroke warning signs and calling 911 immediately may make the difference between a strong recovery or long-term disability; survival or death. Stroke is largely treatable if you call 911 as soon as you recognize the symptoms.
- High blood pressure is a leading cause and controllable risk factor for stroke and heart disease. It's important to know your numbers and work with a health care professional to control levels and manage risks.
- Having a stroke puts you at a higher risk for a second one, however, there are things you can do to reduce your risk, starting with identifying what caused your stroke and uncovering all of your personal risk factors.

**BE A STROKE HERO**



**LEARN TO SPOT A STROKE F.A.S.T.**

**Our power is in knowledge.**

Can prevention be a super-power? Without a doubt.

Can acting F.A.S.T. change a life? **Absolutely.**

**Your Health is in Your Hands. Let's defeat stroke by acting now.**



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## Featured Local Survivor Story by Live Fierce. Be Well. in New York City Sponsor:

Please visit [this link](#) for additional resources and information.

### Young, Healthy and a Stroke Survivor

There isn't much that Ramit Malhotra remembers about the morning of April 17, 2018, but it was a day that would change his outlook on life forever.

While driving on the Long Island Expressway, Ramit suddenly felt a shooting pain in his neck, which turned into a loss of function on his right side. His first instinct was to video call his then-fiancée, Sumiti, but the call dropped. Despite starting to lose control of half his body, Ramit managed to pull off the expressway and into a bank parking lot.

After that, his memory gets fuzzy. He later found out that a bank customer noticed him in the parking lot, realized something was wrong, and alerted the security guard, who called 911.

**Ramit would soon learn that, despite being a healthy, fit 28-year-old, he had suffered a stroke.**

His NewYork-Presbyterian Queens care team, led by neurologist Dr. Jay Yasen, had to act quickly. A CT scan was done to rule out the possibility of bleeding in his head. Next was a CT angiogram, a type of imaging used to evaluate the blood vessels, which uncovered the cause of the stroke: a right vertebral artery dissection, which is a tear in the tissue layers of the vertebral artery that runs along the back of the neck.

**It turned out that a month prior, Ramit had been lifting weights and experienced an intense pain in his neck followed by dizziness. He thought he had strained a muscle. A few weeks after he noticed a slight droop to his face. He visited an urgent care center, but they dismissed his concerns. Two weeks later, he had the stroke.**

Dr. Yasen suspected a blood clot had formed at the site of the tear in Ramit's neck. He administered a medication called tPA to dissolve the clot, and Ramit initially showed signs of improvement. But 1 ½ hours later, his head and neck pain intensified, his blood pressure shot up, he lost all movement on his right side, and he became more confused.

"At that point, I suspected the clot may have traveled from the vicinity of the dissection in the neck up to another artery within the brain," says Dr. Yasen.

Ramit underwent another CT scan to confirm that there was still no bleeding in his brain, followed by a traditional angiogram.

The angiogram, however, showed no signs of a blockage. Dr. Yasen says it's possible that it just took time for the medication to clear the clot, or the mere act of inserting the catheter and injecting the iodine contrast had created enough pressure to push the clot through and open up the artery. Either way, Ramit now appeared to be in the clear.

**His care team quickly performed an MRI of his brain. It revealed that he'd had not just one stroke, but two additional small strokes. A quick diagnosis and recovery meant Ramit could marry his wife, Sumiti, as planned just two months after his stroke.**

"I never suspected this would happen to me," says Ramit. "But I've learned you don't take time for granted. Soak in every moment — and don't take your body for granted, either."



## Women and Stroke

Learn more about [women and stroke](#).

### STROKE IN U.S. WOMEN BY THE NUMBERS



One in 5 women will have a stroke.  
 About 55,000 more women than men have a stroke each year.



**#3**  
 cause of death

Stroke is the No. 3 cause of death in women.  
 Stroke kills over 85,000 women a year.



Among women, Black women have the highest prevalence of stroke.

## Why are women at higher risk of stroke than men?

Higher stroke risk in women might be due to:

- **Are pregnant.** Pregnant women are three times more likely to have a stroke as women of the same age.
- **Have preeclampsia.** This dangerous condition of high blood pressure during pregnancy doubles stroke risk later in life.
- **Take birth control pills.** These can double the risk of stroke, especially in women with high blood pressure.
- **Use hormone replacement therapy.** It doesn't lower it, like once thought.
- **Have migraines with aura and smoke.** Strokes are more common in women who have migraines with aura and smoke, compared with other women.
- **Have atrial fibrillation.** This quivering or irregular heartbeat can increase stroke risk fivefold. After age 75, it's more common in women than men.

*As a woman you are a lot of things to a lot of people. You are busy. You are stressed. You are strong. You are irreplaceable. You are a caretaker. But do you care for yourself as well as you do others?*

### Additional Stroke Symptoms in Women

- General weakness
- Disorientation and confusion or memory problems
- Fatigue
- Nausea or vomiting

**National Women's Health Week is May 14-20**

**Mother's Day is May 14**

Encourage yourself or the women in your lives to make health a priority (including prevention, care and wellbeing)

## Reducing Stroke Risk

### 8 key measures for improving and maintaining cardiovascular health

Better cardiovascular health helps lower the risk of stroke and other major health problems.



**Eat Better**  
**Be More Active**  
**Quit Tobacco**  
**Get Healthy Sleep**  
**Manage Weight**  
**Control Cholesterol**  
**Manage Blood Sugar**  
**Manage Blood Pressure**

heart.org/lifes8

### How does high blood pressure increase stroke risk?

High blood pressure is a major risk factor for stroke.

HBP adds to your heart's workload and damages your arteries and organs over time. Compared to people whose blood pressure is normal, people with HBP are more likely to have a stroke.

About 87% of strokes are caused by narrowed or clogged blood vessels in the brain that cut off the blood flow to brain cells. This is an **ischemic stroke**. High blood pressure causes damage to the inner lining of the blood vessels. This will narrow an artery.

About 13% of strokes occur when a blood vessel ruptures in or near the brain. This is a **hemorrhagic stroke**. Chronic HBP or aging blood vessels are the main causes of this type of stroke. HBP strains blood vessels. Over time, they no longer hold up to the pressure and rupture.

Learn more about [High Blood Pressure and Stroke](#) and [Know Your Numbers](#)

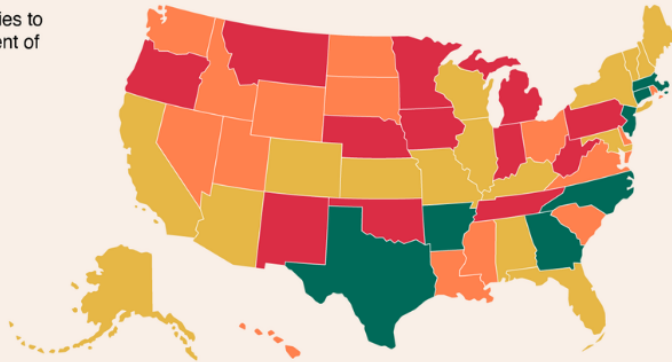


## CPR Spotlight

### The Smart Heart Sports Coalition

43 states have insufficient policies to save student athletes in the event of Sudden Cardiac Arrest.

- RED - NO POLICIES
- ORANGE - 1 POLICY
- YELLOW - 2 POLICIES
- GREEN - ALL POLICIES



New coalition aims to make the resources available for schools to implement tailored emergency response plans that include training in CPR and AEDs

The American Heart Association is proud to join the NFL and other major sports leagues to launch the Smart Heart Sports Coalition to prevent death from sudden cardiac arrest among high school athletes. The coalition is advocating for the implementation of three best practice policies to prevent death from Sudden Cardiac Arrest. [Read more here.](#)

The American Heart Association and the Buffalo Bills plan to train thousands of Western New Yorkers in [Hands-Only CPR](#) over the next five years through community empowerment events, each aimed at training hundreds of people. Quick, simple and easy-to-learn, Hands-Only CPR has been shown to be as effective in the first few minutes as conventional CPR for cardiac arrest at home, at work or in public. To read the full story, [click here.](#)



**Live Fierce™**  
Take Action

## TEAMING UP TO SAVE LIVES THROUGH CPR

The Buffalo Bills are a proud Live Fierce, Be The Beat supporter.

Interested in watching Daman Hamlin's first sit-down interview since announcing his comeback? [Watch here](#)

## Recipes of the Month



**Egg, avocado and bean breakfast burrito**

This perfect protein-based breakfast is easy to prepare the night before for a fast and flavorful grab-and-go breakfast

[View Recipe](#)



**Lemongrass shrimp with spring pea salad**

Lemongrass brings a zesty citrus flavor to the shrimp, complimenting the peas bathed in a fresh mint and lemon vinaigrette

[View Recipe](#)



**Triple berry smoothie**

This trio of berry flavors will brighten your day. It's a super simple shake to make and chock full of powerhouse nutrients.

[View Recipe](#)



American Stroke Association®  
A division of the American Heart Association.

Together to End Stroke®

# High blood pressure increases risk of stroke.



Normal blood pressure is below

**120/80**



People with high blood pressure have a significantly higher risk of stroke.<sup>1</sup>



At age 50, people without high blood pressure have a



life expectancy

**5 YEARS LONGER**

than people with high blood pressure.<sup>3</sup>



Up to **80%** of strokes may be **prevented.**<sup>2</sup>

**Stroke occurs when a blood vessel to the brain is blocked or bursts.**

Blood and oxygen flow are interrupted, and brain cells begin to die.

More than

**1 in 3**

American adults with high blood pressure **don't know they have it.**<sup>3</sup>



Have your blood pressure checked and keep it in check to



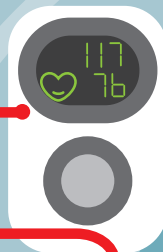
**REDUCE** your risk of stroke.

<sup>1</sup> Benjamin et al; Circulation, 2019;139:e56-528 // <sup>2</sup> D'Agostino, R.B. et al. Stroke. 1994;25:40-43 // <sup>3</sup> Mozaffarian D et al. Circulation. 2017; 135:e135-139

Together to End Stroke™ before it happens. For more information, visit [heart.org/HBP](http://heart.org/HBP).

# BLOOD PRESSURE MEASUREMENT INSTRUCTIONS

**USE A VALIDATED MONITOR. ASK YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER OR PHARMACIST FOR HELP.**



**IN THE 30 MINUTES BEFORE YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE IS TAKEN:**

- NO SMOKING.
- NO EXERCISE.
- NO CAFFEINATED BEVERAGES.
- NO ALCOHOL.

**FOR 5 MINUTES BEFORE YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE IS TAKEN:**

- SIT STILL IN A CHAIR.

**RIGHT BEFORE:**

- MAKE SURE THE CUFF IS THE RIGHT SIZE.
- WRAP IT JUST ABOVE THE BEND IN THE ELBOW.
- WRAP IT AGAINST SKIN, NOT OVER CLOTHING.

**WHILE YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE IS BEING TAKEN:**

- RELAX.
- DON'T TALK.
- REST THE CUFFED ARM COMFORTABLY ON A FLAT SURFACE (LIKE A TABLE) AT HEART LEVEL.
- SIT UPRIGHT, BACK STRAIGHT AND SUPPORTED.
- KEEP LEGS UNCROSSED AND FEET FLAT ON THE FLOOR.

**AFTER:**

- IF AT HOME, WAIT ONE MINUTE AND TAKE A SECOND READING. AVERAGE THE READINGS.
- CONSIDER A THIRD READING.

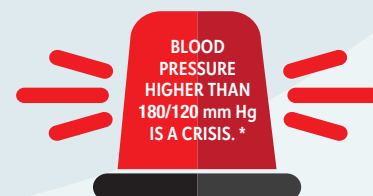
**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- KEEP A JOURNAL. BRING IT TO EVERY CHECKUP.
- HAVE YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER CHECK YOUR MONITOR ANNUALLY.

[GoRedforWomen.org](http://GoRedforWomen.org)

## American Heart Association recommended blood pressure levels

BLOOD PRESSURE CATEGORY	SYSTOLIC mm Hg (upper number)		DIASTOLIC mm Hg (lower number)
NORMAL	LESS THAN 120	and	LESS THAN 80
ELEVATED	120-129	and	LESS THAN 80
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 1	130-139	or	80-89
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 2	140 OR HIGHER	OR	90 OR HIGHER
HYPERTENSIVE CRISIS (consult your doctor immediately)	HIGHER THAN 180	and/or	HIGHER THAN 120



\*Wait five minutes and take your blood pressure again. If your readings are still high, contact your healthcare provider immediately.

LEARN MORE AT [HEART.ORG/HBP](http://HEART.ORG/HBP)