

Are you at risk?

(STROKE)
THE STAK
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STROKE is one of the most prevalent causes of death among the global population. While more common in men, fatality from stroke among women is higher than that of breast cancer.

However, the risk of stroke can be reduced through awareness of risk factors. Several major ones are listed below.

● High blood pressure

Also known as hypertension, this condition occurs when blood pressure is above the rate of 140/90. This causes high pressure to be exerted on blood vessels, weakening them and increasing one's risk of getting haemorrhagic stroke.

● High cholesterol level

High cholesterol can lead to the formation of a substance called atheroma in the blood vessels. This substance sticks to artery walls and causes atherosclerosis, which is a condition involving the narrowing and hardening of the arteries. Stroke can happen when normal blood flow is slowed or obstructed.

● Diabetes

High blood sugar level can contribute to the occurrence of atherosclerosis. The lack of insulin in the body to break down glucose for cell consumption can lead to excess fatty deposits and clots in the bloodstream, increasing the risk of stroke. Diabetes is usually accompanied by other risk factors such as high cholesterol

and obesity.

● Heavy alcohol consumption

Risk factors of stroke such as hypertension, diabetes and obesity are associated with heavy alcohol consumption. Besides that, excessive alcohol intake can trigger atrial fibrillation, which is a type of irregular heartbeat that can cause blood clots to form in the heart. If these clots travel to the brain, a stroke may occur.

● Smoking

When smoke is inhaled, various chemicals such as carbon monoxide, formaldehyde, arsenic and cyanide can damage healthy cells in the body, increasing one's risk of stroke. Smoking can increase cholesterol and blood pressure levels as well as the likelihood of blood clots forming.

● Obesity

Because of excess fat in the body, poor blood flow and blockages (the two major causes of stroke) can occur. Besides that, people with obesity are more likely to have comorbidities such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes.

These are the main risk factors, but studies show that there may be lesser-known causes of stroke. Stroke can happen to anyone, even people who look generally healthy on the outside. Thus, you should always be aware of your health and undergo regular medical check-ups.

