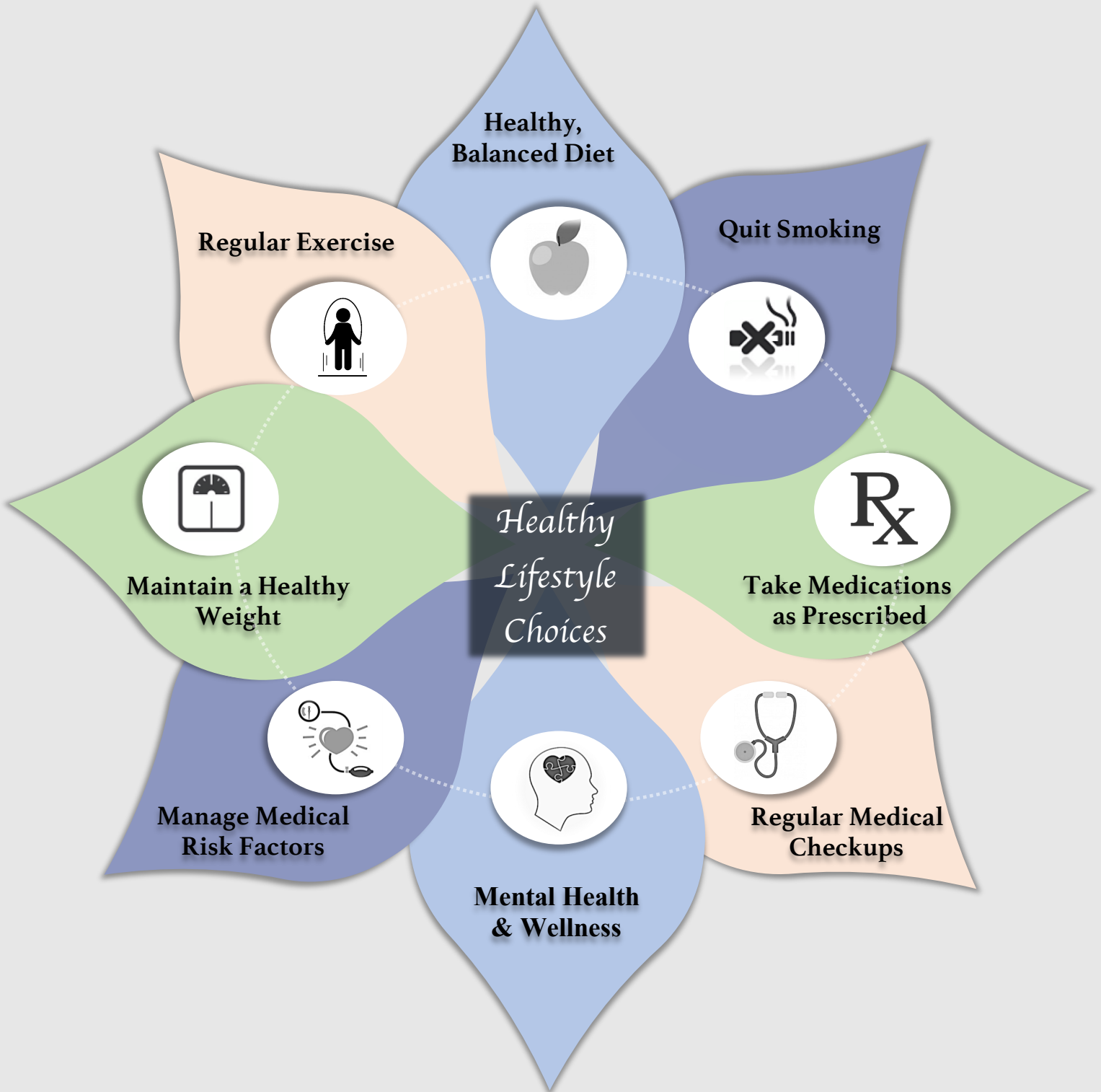



Stroke Recovery

Lifestyle & Risk Reduction





How do I manage my blood pressure?

Step 1: If your doctor has put you on medication, take it exactly as prescribed.

Step 2: Keep track of your blood pressure.

Step 3: Be more physically active. If you are overweight, work to reach and maintain a healthy weight.

Step 4: Reduce your salt (sodium) intake.

Step 5: Eat a heart-healthy diet.

How do I manage my cholesterol?

Step 1: Get your cholesterol checked at least once every five years. Start at age 20. Talk to your doctor about your numbers and how they impact your overall risk.

Step 2: Limit your saturated fat intake to less than 5 to 6 percent of total calories.

Step 3: Look for foods with “0” grams of trans fat.

Step 4: If your doctor has put you on medication, take it exactly as prescribed.

Why should I lose weight?

People who are overweight or obese are more likely to develop heart disease and stroke, even if they have no other risk factors. Excess weight can raise blood pressure and cholesterol and lead to diabetes. Losing weight will reduce your risk of heart problems and many other diseases.

<https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/index.html>

How do I stop smoking?

Get support. *Don't give up.*

1-866-697-8487

Step 1: Decide to quit and stick to it.

Step 2: Ask your healthcare provider for information, programs and medications that may help.

Step 3: Fight the urge to smoke by going to smoke-free facilities. Avoid staying around people who smoke.

Step 4: Ask family and friends to support you. Join a support group.

Why should I be physically active?

- Regular, moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity can lower your risk of: Heart disease, high blood pressure, high LDL (bad) cholesterol, overweight/obesity, diabetes, and stroke.
- Regular exercise is associated with: strengthens your heart, lungs, bones, and muscles, decreases stress, increases quality of sleep, increases self-confidence.

Physical Activity Recommendations

American Heart Association recommends 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity (such as brisk walking) per week.

- Approximately 30 minutes of exercise daily.
- Include muscle-strengthening activity at least two days per week.
- Take 10-15 minute walking breaks during the day or after meals.
- If you have a chronic medical condition, check with your doctor before you start.



Diet & Nutrition

Diets for Brain Health:

- ✓ The DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) Diet
- ✓ Mediterranean Diet



American Heart/Stroke Association Recipes

<https://recipes.heart.org/en/recipes>

Recommended Cookbooks

<https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/aha-cookbooks>

Healthy Food Delivery Subscriptions

<https://www.blueapron.com>
<https://www.freshly.com>
<https://www.petespaleo.com/products/paleo-meal-delivery>
<https://www.sakara.com>
<https://www.trifectanutrition.com>

How should I change my eating habits?

1. Eat a variety of nutritious foods from all food groups.
2. Limit salt, sweets, sugar-sweetened beverages, saturated fats, trans fat, sodium and red meat.
3. Eat lots of fruits, vegetables and fiber-rich whole grains.
4. Consume low-fat (1 percent) and fat-free (skim) dairy products.
5. Eat skinless poultry and fish (Salmon, albacore tuna, mackerel, herring or trout, which are rich in omega 3 fatty acids).
6. Eat nuts and legumes.
7. Drink plenty of water.
8. Limit alcohol intake: 1-2 drinks per day for men, 1 drink per day for women.
9. Cook foods in healthier ways like baking, boiling, broiling, grilling, roasting or stewing. Don't fry foods in oil.

How Do I Follow a Healthy Diet?

Vegetables

One serving= 1 cup raw leafy vegetables, ½ cup cut-up raw or cooked vegetables; ½ cup vegetable juice.

Eat a variety of colors and types, especially deeply colored vegetables, such as spinach, carrots, and broccoli. Look for vegetables that are fresh, frozen, or canned in water without added sugar, saturated and *trans* fats, or salt.

Fruits

One serving= 1 medium fruit (about the size of a baseball); ¼ cup dried fruit; ½ cup fresh, frozen, or canned fruit; ½ cup 100% fruit juice. Eat a variety of colors and types, especially deeply colored fruits such as peaches and berries. Eat whole fruits to get all of the nutrients.

Whole grains

One serving= 1 slice bread; ½ cup hot cereal, 1 cup baked cereal; or ½ cup cooked rice or pasta (about the size of a baseball). At least half of your servings should be high- fiber whole grains. Select items like whole-wheat bread, whole-grain crackers and brown rice.

Poultry, fish and lean meats

(less than 6 cooked ounces per day) A 3 oz. portion is about the size of a deck of playing cards ½ of a chicken breast or ¾ cup of flaked fish. Enjoy at least 2 servings of baked or grilled fish each week; especially salmon, trout, and herring. Trim all visible fat from meats before cooking. Remove skin from poultry.

Nuts, seeds, and legumes

One serving= 1/3 cup or ½ oz nuts; 2 Tbsp. peanut butter (no added salt); 2 Tbsp. or ½ oz seeds; ½ cup cooked legumes (dried beans or peas). Add beans to your soups, salads, and pasta dishes. Try unsalted nuts in your salads, stir-fries, or stirred into yoghurt.

Low-fat dairy products

One serving= 1 cup milk or yogurt or ½ oz. low sodium, fat-free or low-fat cheese (about the size of 6 stacked dice). Use milk products with 0% to 1% fat. Have only fat-free or low-fat yogurt with no added sugars. Cheeses (low-sodium, fat-free or low-fat); try fat-free or low-fat cottage cheese.

Fight Stress with Healthy Habits

1. **Snooze more.** Try to get six to eight hours of sleep each night. To fight insomnia, add mindfulness and activity.
2. **Let worry go.** Give yourself a break and just breathe.
3. **Laugh it up.** Laughter makes us feel good. Don't be afraid to laugh out loud, even when you're alone.
4. **Get connected.** A daily dose of friendship is great medicine. Make time to call friends and family.
5. **Get organized.** Use "to do" lists to help you focus on your most important tasks.
6. **Practice giving back.** Volunteer your time or spend time helping out a friend. Helping others helps you.
7. **Be active every day.** Exercise can relieve mental and physical tension.
8. **Give up bad habits.** Too much alcohol, tobacco, or caffeine can increase blood pressure. Cut back or quit to decrease anxiety.
9. **Make time to learn a new skill, work towards a goal, or to love and help others.**



How can I manage my post stroke depression?

1. **Treatment.** Includes medications, counseling or mental health therapy. Medications prescribed by your healthcare provider can help with depression, improve motor function, and stroke-related cognitive deficits.
2. **Exercise.** Exercise can reduce depressive symptoms and improve quality of life in patients with post-stroke depression.
3. **Join a Support Group.** Mindful connections are important after a stroke. Other survivors will understand your issues and offer support and ideas to help you manage your emotions.
4. **Communication.** Be open and honest to your caregivers, family, and friends about your feelings and concerns.
5. **Stress Reduction.** Practice stress and anxiety management techniques such as deep breathing, guided imagery or meditation, aromatherapy, walking, journaling, or painting.
6. **Improve Nutrition.** Foods rich in omega-3-fatty acids (fish, flaxseed, walnuts), folic acid (beans, oranges, broccoli), vitamin B (eggs, low-fat milk), and complex carbohydrates (brown rice, oatmeal, whole wheat) can help improve mood and fight depression. Minimize or eliminate alcohol consumption and smoking.
7. **Be Patient.** Be patient with yourself and loved ones during your stroke recovery. Work together as a team.

Emotional health is just as important as physical health.
1/3 of stroke survivors experience post-stroke depression. 30-40% of patients will suffer from depression within 5 years following the stroke.

Untreated post-stroke depression is related to:

- ✓ Impaired recovery of cognitive function
- ✓ Low motivation
- ✓ Less effective rehabilitation; delay in physical recovery
- ✓ Increased mortality
- ✓ Suicide



Caregivers, family, friends, and co-workers can be helpful in recognizing post-stroke depression symptoms and encouraging you to consult a healthcare professional.