

SEVEN GOALS TO PREVENT A STROKE

AND HOW TO ACHIEVE THEM



1 Maintain a blood pressure of less than 120/80.

- » Avoid high-cholesterol foods.
- » Reduce your sodium intake; aim for 1,500 mg a day.



2 Lose weight and keep your body mass index (BMI) below 25.

- » Increase exercise with fun activities like playing tennis and make them part of your everyday life.
- » Limit calories to 1,500 to 2,000 a day (depending on your activity level and BMI).
- » Eat four to five cups of fruits and vegetables every day, one serving of fish two to three times a week, and several daily servings of whole grains and low-fat dairy.



3 Exercise moderately at least five days a week.

- » Aim for 30 minutes of activity a day.
- » When exercising, reach a level at which you're breathing hard but can still talk.
- » Opt for the stairs instead of an elevator when possible.



4 Limit your alcohol intake.

- » Drink in moderation—have no more than one glass of alcohol a day.
- » Make red wine your first choice; it contains resveratrol, which may help protect the heart and brain.



5 Treat an irregular heartbeat.

- » Visit your doctor if you have symptoms such as heart palpitations or shortness of breath.
- » Take medications as prescribed by your doctor.



6 Care for diabetes.

- » Monitor your blood sugar as directed by your doctor.
- » Use diet, exercise, and medication to keep your blood sugar within the recommended range.



7 Quit smoking.

- » Ask your doctor for the most appropriate way for you to quit.
- » Take advantage of the many aids available (e.g., nicotine patches, counseling, medication), and don't give up—each attempt brings you closer to beating the habit!