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!