



BREAST CANCER AWARENESS

Don't Have a Stroke, Quit the Smoke

Stroke is the second leading cause of death and the third leading cause of disability. One in four people are in danger of having a stroke in their lifetime. Research published by Markidan et al. (2018) report that young men as well as women are at an increased risk of ischemic stroke if they smoke. Smoking continues to be a modifiable risk factor that can determine if one succumbs to chronic disease, disability, and yes, even death. Lifestyle risk factors for stroke include being overweight or obese, physical inactivity, tobacco use and alcohol abuse. Not only is smoking related to stroke but those who are the recipients of second-hand smoke are also at risk.

Smoking is related to heart disease and stroke because it can raise the fat in your blood, lower the good cholesterol (HDL's), make your blood stickier where it is more likely to clot and block blood flow to the heart and brain. Smoking also damages the cells that line the blood vessels, increases the buildup of plaque, fat, cholesterol, calcium and other substances, and causes thickening and narrowing of the blood vessels.

Breathing in second hand smoke is related to heart disease and stroke because it is the same as smoking. Secondhand smoke is the smoke from burning tobacco products as well as the smoke breathed out by someone smoking. The CDC (2022) reports that second hand smoke causes nearly 34,000 early deaths from coronary heart disease in the US each year. Nonsmokers who breathe second hand smoke at home or at work increase their risk of developing heart disease by 25-30% and increase the risk of suffering a stroke by 30%. Second hand exposure causes more than 8,000 deaths per year from stroke because it interferes with the normal function of the heart, blood, and vascular systems in ways that increase this grave risk. Sadly, even briefly breathing in secondhand smoke can damage the lining of blood vessels and cause the blood to become stickier.

A stroke occurs when the blood supply to the brain is blocked or when a blood vessel in the brain bursts, causing parts of the brain to become damaged or die. Stroke can cause disability (such as paralysis, muscle weakness, trouble speaking, or memory loss) or death (CDC, 2022). Stroke prevention and detection are key in promotive health interventions. Those who smoke need support and a plan to quit. Quitting has been shown to have a great impact on returning to a well state. It is important for all in the community to know the signs of stroke in order for those experiencing it to get help quickly.

The acronym FAST is the best way to identify one having a stroke. F=facial drooping, A=arm weakness, S=speech difficulty, and T=timely emergency service. Identifying the signs of stroke can significantly reduce the incidence and impact of stroke.

CDC (2022). Smoking and Heart Disease and Stroke. <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/diseases/heart-disease-stroke.html#:~:text=Secondhand%20smoke%20increases%20the%20risk,of%20having%20a%20heart%20attack.>

How Can Heart Disease and Stroke Be Prevented?

Heart disease and stroke are major causes of death and disability in the United States. Many people are at high risk for these diseases and don't know it. The good news is that many risk factors for heart disease and stroke can be prevented or controlled.

The ABCs of Heart Health

Aspirin:

- Aspirin may help reduce your risk for heart disease and stroke. **Do not take aspirin if you think you are having a stroke.** It can make some types of stroke worse. Talk to your doctor about whether aspirin is right for you.

Blood pressure:

- Control your blood pressure.

Cholesterol:

- Manage your cholesterol.

Smoking:

- Quit smoking, or don't start.

In addition to your ABCs, several lifestyle choices can help protect your heart and brain health.

These include the following:

- Avoid breathing secondhand smoke.
- Eat fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Eat low-fat, low-salt foods most of the time.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Exercise regularly.
- Limit alcohol use.
- Control other health conditions (such as diabetes).

- Quit Tobacco - UCanQuit2:

<https://www.tricare.mil/HealthWellness/Tobacco/UCanQuit2>

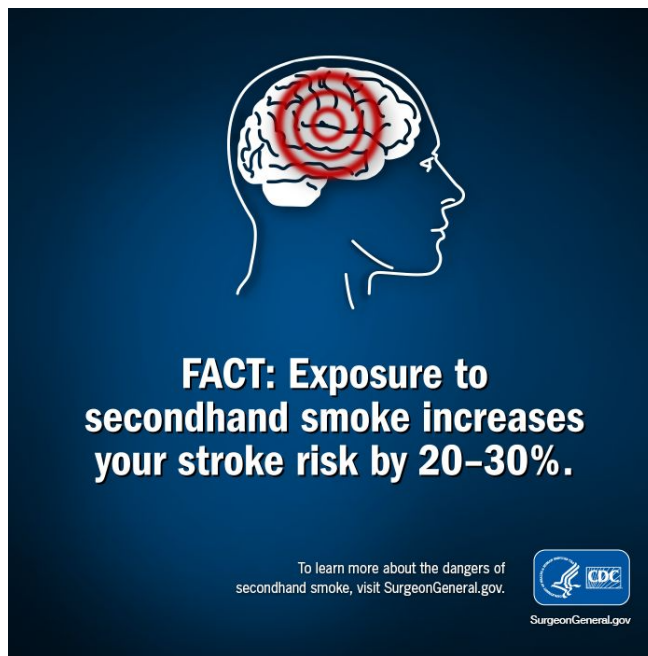
- BeTobaccoFree.gov: <https://betobaccofree.hhs.gov/>



A Personal Message From Your Health Promotion Team

Make a plan, set up your support system, and begin your quit!

If you believe that smoking is your comfort or strength
know that “Our strength grows out of our weakness”
-Ralph Waldo Emerson



"Quitting smoking is a transformational
process that will change your confidence
in yourself, your health, and your life"
-Nasia Davos

Got questions on other health issues related to sleep health, physical activity, tobacco, or nutrition? Share them with us and we will help you "Bust The Myths!" Send your questions to usaf.jbsa.afmsa.mbx.hpo@mail.mil. Make sure to include in the subject line "Health Myth Buster." For more online health tips visit the Air Force Health Promotion webpage <https://www.airforcemedicine.af.mil/Resources/Health-Promotion/>



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Air Force Health Promotion HQ

Community Events

HERE'S WHAT'S GOING
ON WHERE YOU LIVE

Your Local Health
Promotion Office



Contact:

Phone:

Email:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday