

Less than one in 100 stroke survivors meet heart health goals

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Micrograph showing cortical pseudolaminar necrosis, a finding seen in strokes on medical imaging and at autopsy. H&E-LFB stain. Credit: Nephron/Wikipedia

Fewer than one in 100 stroke survivors meet all of Life's Simple 7 goals for ideal cardiovascular health identified by the American Heart Association. Moreover, the proportion who fail to meet almost all of the criteria is on the rise, according to preliminary research presented at the American Stroke Association's International Stroke Conference 2018, a

world premier meeting dedicated to the science and treatment of cerebrovascular disease for researchers and clinicians.

Life's Simple 7 was developed to monitor healthy behaviors: not smoking, getting [regular physical activity](#), eating a healthy diet, and achieving normal [body mass index](#), blood pressure, blood sugar and total cholesterol.

In a nationally representative sample of 67,514 U.S adults, 1,597 had prior stroke and had data for all 7 measures. Researchers reported that fewer than one in five stroke survivors met at least 4 ideal health metrics during the study period. The proportion who met none or just one of the ideal health indicators increased from 18 percent in 1988-1994 to 35 percent in 2011-2014.

Other changes between 1988-1994 and 2011-2014:

- rates of high [blood pressure](#) decreased from 45 percent to 26 percent;
- rates of high cholesterol decreased from 37 percent to 10 percent;
- rates of obesity increased from 27 percent to 39 percent;
- rates of prediabetes/diabetes increased from 49 percent to 56 percent; and
- proportion with a poor diet increased from 14 percent to 51 percent

After adjusting for other risk factors, stroke survivors meeting zero or one of the ideal Life's Simple 7 metrics were more likely to be black, living in poverty and not graduated from high school. These results highlight the need for targeted interventions to improve cardiovascular health, researchers said.

Provided by American Heart Association

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