Study: Optimism after stroke may speed up healing
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"Our results suggest that optimistic people have a better disease outcome, thus boosting morale may be an ideal way to improve mental health and recovery after a stroke," said lead author Dr. Yun-Ju Lai in a statement.

The study was funded by the National Institutes of Health and the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke. Researchers said understanding how the elements of the study—such as how inflammation and optimism impact or relate to each other—will provide scientific structure to establish new methods for stroke recovery.

"Patients and their families should know the importance of a positive environment that could benefit the patient," Lai said. "Mental health does affect recovery after a stroke."

Stroke is the No. 5 cause of death in the U.S., according to the ASA. The disease affects arteries leading to and inside the brain. If a stroke occurs on the left side of the brain, it can result in memory loss and/or issues with language and speech. If the disease happens on the right side of the brain, issues with vision and a quick, inquisitive behavioral style are among the things that can emerge. Stroke, along with other cardiovascular diseases such as heart disease, cause 1 in 3 deaths in the U.S., according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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