



JULY 2019

BE PREPARED

CARE CONNECTION

REDUCING YOUR RISK OF STROKE

There's been a lot of talk about strokes in the news so far this year, from the tragic death of 52 year-old Luke Perry, to the 28 year-old Oklahoma man who suffered a stroke after cracking his neck, to Randy Travis's reminiscence about the stroke that put him into a coma years back.

A stroke occurs when the blood flow to an area of the brain is cut off and deprives your brain cells of oxygen, causing you to lose muscle control and memory, experience weakness or paralysis, and lose the ability to speak — and it's way more common than you might think.



According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, stroke causes 1 out of every 20 American deaths, killing about 140,000 Americans each year. In the US, a stroke occurs every 40 seconds, and every 4 minutes, someone dies of a stroke. While it's true that your risk for stroke increases with age, strokes can — and do — happen at any time.

These statistics might be hard to swallow, but it's not all doom and gloom. There are steps you can take to help reduce your risk of stroke.

- 1. Monitor your blood pressure.** High blood pressure is one of the leading causes of stroke, so it's important to have your blood pressure checked by your doctor to ensure that you're at normal, healthy levels. If you have high blood pressure, you should work with your doctor to mitigate your risk.
- 2. Limit your sodium intake.** Your diet is important, and it's been proven that high-sodium foods are the worst for your blood pressure. Eat fewer processed foods to ensure a healthy sodium intake.
- 3. Eat plenty of heart-healthy superfoods.** You can lower your blood pressure naturally by eating anti-inflammatory foods, like leafy greens, whole grains, berries, and heart-healthy fish.
- 4. Add potassium-rich foods into your diet.** Potassium is important in balancing your body's salt intake because it regulates the fluids in your body, so make sure you're getting enough of this vital mineral naturally.
- 5. Get moving!** Keeping active, even if it's just for 30 minutes per day, is important because staying sedentary significantly increases your risk for health issues like obesity, heart disease, and stroke.
- 6. Quit smoking.** There are a million reasons why you should quit smoking, but here's a big one: smoking causes plaque buildup in your arteries that puts you at an increased risk for stroke. Having clearer arteries helps to ensure adequate oxygen-rich bloodflow to your heart and brain.

Source: [Prevention](#)



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Please note: If your medical coverage is through Kaiser, this benefit is not applicable.

WELLNESS TIP!

Make time for exercise!

You might think you don't have enough time for at least 30 minutes of exercise per day, but every little bit counts! That means taking the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator, parking in a farther section of the parking lot, taking a family walk in the evening, or doing some crunches while you watch TV all adds up. The important thing is to be idle as infrequently as possible — just move whenever you can!

Sources: [TotalWellness](#)



DON'T FORGET

YOU CAN GET HELP FINDING A PROVIDER

Best Doctors can help find the right doctor or specialist for you with their **Find a Best Doctor** service. With this service, you can select your criteria and Best Doctors will do the searching for you. You can access the Find a Best Doctor service at [members.bestdoctors.com](#) or by phone at **800-497-1634**.

You can also use **Anthem's Provider Locator**, available on Anthem's website and by phone at **800-810-BLUE**.



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3. If you are the primary subscriber, click Yes; if you're creating an account as a covered dependent, click No and then provide the primary subscriber's information.
4. Once you click Finish, you'll be ready to have online medical visits when you need them.

And remember:

LiveHealth Online is free for FMCP members and their dependents through 2019!

To learn more or to sign up, visit [www.livehealthonline.com](#).

Please note: LiveHealth Online is only available to members who have a PPO plan through the FMCP.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SEEING YOUR DOCTORS

You know the drill: you're supposed to get a physical, an eye exam, and two dental cleanings per year. But what you might not know is *why*. If you feel healthy, it might be tempting to skip one or more of these key visits, but they're much more worthwhile than you may realize.

• Why to see your Primary Care Provider:

You go to your PCP for your annual physical and schedule appointments to see them when you're sick, but your PCP plays a larger role in your health-care than you might think. Your PCP can help you better manage chronic disease and provide routine screenings to help catch health issues earlier. Your PCP is also your main point of contact when you have questions about your health or need a referral for a specialist. Seeing one primary doctor helps to keep your health history transparent and organized, so your doctors know everything they need to know about you, which may help them to catch early symptoms of serious conditions. Research has also shown that routine appointments with a primary care doctor help to decrease overall health costs for patients.



• Why to see your Eye Doctor:

Your eye doctor checks your vision and prescribes glasses that might help you see better. But even if you have perfect vision, it's important to visit your eye doctor. Eye doctors can be among the first to spot early symptoms of other diseases, like glaucoma or even diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, hormonal imbalance, aneurysm, or brain tumor! Any issues with your circulatory system will show up in the blood vessels in and around your retina, which eye doctors are trained to spot.

• Why to see your Dentist:

Your dentist cleans and evaluates your teeth and fixes problems like cavities as needed. But you might not know that your dentist can also help spot early signs of oral cancer by performing a standard oral cancer screening or diagnose gum problems before they worsen and become gum disease. Your dentists may also be able to spot early signs of diabetes and osteoporosis.

Source: [UnityPoint Health](#), [Bearable Dentistry](#), [Woman's Day](#)

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

PPO - Anthem

1-800-810-BLUE
(Provider locator services)
[www.anthem.com](#)

Rx Drugs - SavRx

1-866-233-4239
[www.savrx.com](#)

Best Doctors

1-800-497-1634
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Dental - MetLife

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