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***May is American Stroke Month***

Stroke is the **No. 4 cause of death** and the **leading cause of disability** in the United States. One **out of every six people** worldwide has a stroke making it the **second leading cause of death in the world** behind heart disease. That means that **every 40 seconds**, someone has a stroke – and if a stroke doesn’t kill, it may cause physical or mental disability.

**UPCOMING EVENTS AND INITIATIVES**

* **31 DAYS OF POWER**
	+ 31 Days of Power is series of organized outreach events across the nation dedicated to narrowing the knowledge gap about stroke.
	+ Show your support by attending an event or creating your own to help spread the Power To End Stroke movement. Events include Power Walks, Ambassador Receptions, Stroke Awareness Events, and many more!
	+ Tell us about it and post your photos on our [**Facebook**](http://www.powertoendstroke.org/facebook) page or [**Tweet**](http://www.powertoendstroke.org/twitter) about your experience and include **#31DaysofPower** in your post.
	+ Nationally sponsored by the Bristol-Myers Squibb/Sanofi Pharmaceuticals Partnership.
	+ <http://www.powertoendstroke.org/get-31days.html>
* **HIP HOP MUSIC VIDEO COMPETITION**
	+ The American Stroke Association will kick off a national hip-hop stroke video competition for 10-15 year olds to broaden public awareness about stroke.
	+ Each video must include the ASA’s hip hop song, a parent or grandparent and demonstrate artistic ability and originality.
	+ The song was written for AHA/ASA by Atlanta-based Osiris South Records, LLC.
	+ All videos will be posted on (URL site) where the public can vote for their favorite.
	+ Hip hop professionals – including actor and TV personality Terrence J. from BET’s *106 & Park* and Cheryl “Salt” James from the 1980s group Salt-n-Pepa – will select the winning video.
	+ The grand-prize winner will meet Terrence J. as he promotes his upcoming movie *Think Like A Man*.
	+ Radio interviews available for Terrence J. and Rani Whitfield, M.D., aka Tha Hip Hop Doc.
	+ Competition launches on Monday, May 7 and ends September 21, 2012.
	+ [strokeassociation.org/AmericanStrokeMonth](http://www.strokeassociation.org/AmericanStrokeMonth)
* **POWER SUNDAY WITH KIRK FRANKLIN**
	+ Grammy award-winning recording artist Kirk Franklin will be headlining the PTES Power Sunday at Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship on Sunday, May 27, 2012.
* **TAKE 2 TO SAVE 2**
	+ Power To End Stroke asks that everyone send at least two health messages to two people that they know are at risk for stroke.
	+ Visit <http://www.powertoendstroke.org/take2.html> to choose the type of message to send and to see the pre-written health messages that can be cut and pasted or read to a loved one.
	+ Spudd Webb, the former NBA Dunk Champion, is helping to spread the message about this deadly disease. His witnessed his father’s stroke and has a special message to share on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=Jj6qk57XWDc&noredirect=1>
* **POWER NUTRITION**
	+ Visit <http://www.powertoendstroke.org/tools-nutrition.html> for helpful tools on how to maintain a healthy diet and live stroke free.

**WARNING SIGNS OF STROKE:**

* SUDDEN numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body.
* SUDDEN confusion, trouble speaking or understanding.
* SUDDEN trouble seeing in one or both eyes.
* SUDDEN trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination.
* SUDDEN severe headache with no known cause.
* Not all of these warning signs occur in every stroke!

**RISK FACTORS FOR STROKE THAT YOU CAN’T CHANGE:**

* **Age** - The chance of having a stroke approximately doubles for each decade of life after age 55. While stroke is common among the elderly, a lot of people under 65 also have strokes.
* **Family History** - Your stroke risk is greater if a parent, grandparent, sister or brother has had a stroke. Some strokes may be symptoms of genetic disorders like CADASIL (Cerebral Autosomal Dominant Arteriopathy with Sub-cortical Infarcts and Leukoencephalopathy), which is caused by a gene mutation that leads to damage of blood vessel walls in the brain, blocking blood flow. Most individuals with CADASIL have a family history of the disorder — each child of a CADASIL parent has a 50% chance of inheriting the disease. Visit the [NINDS website](http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/cadasil/CADASIL.htm) or [read the AHA/ASA scientific statement on this topic](http://stroke.ahajournals.org/content/early/2011/07/21/STR.0b013e3182299496) for more details about CADASIL.
* **Race** — [African Americans](http://www.powertoendstroke.org/) have a much higher risk of death from a stroke than Caucasians do. This is partly because blacks have higher risks of high blood pressure, diabetes and obesity.
* **Gender** — Stroke is more common in men than in women. In most age groups, more men than women will have a stroke in a given year. However, more than half of total stroke deaths occur in women.  At all ages, more women than men die of stroke. Use of birth control pills and pregnancy pose special stroke risks for women.
* **Prior stroke, TIA or heart attack** — The risk of stroke for someone who has already had one is many times that of a person who has not. Transient ischemic attacks ([TIAs](http://www.strokeassociation.org/STROKEORG/AboutStroke/TypesofStroke/TIA/TIA-Transient-Ischemic-Attack_UCM_310942_Article.jsp)) are "warning strokes" that produce stroke-like symptoms but no lasting damage. TIAs are strong predictors of stroke. A person who's had one or more TIAs is almost 10 times more likely to have a stroke than someone of the same age and sex who hasn't. Recognizing and treating TIAs can reduce your risk of a major stroke. TIA should be considered a medical emergency and followed up immediately with a healthcare professional. If you've had a [heart attack](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/HeartAttack/Heart-Attack_UCM_001092_SubHomePage.jsp), you're at higher risk of having a stroke, too.

**RISK FACTORS FOR STROKE THAT YOU CAN CHANGE OR CONTROL:**

* **High blood pressure** — [High blood pressure](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/HighBloodPressure/High-Blood-Pressure_UCM_002020_SubHomePage.jsp) is the leading cause of stroke and the most important controllable risk factor for stroke. Many people believe the effective treatment of high blood pressure is a key reason for the accelerated decline in the death rates for stroke.
* **Cigarette smoking** — In recent years, studies have shown [cigarette smoking](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/GettingHealthy/QuitSmoking/Quit-Smoking_UCM_001085_SubHomePage.jsp) to be an important risk factor for stroke. The nicotine and carbon monoxide in cigarette smoke damage the cardiovascular system in many ways. The use of oral contraceptives combined with cigarette smoking greatly increases stroke risk.
* **Diabetes mellitus** — [Diabetes](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/Diabetes/Diabetes_UCM_001091_SubHomePage.jsp) is an independent risk factor for stroke.  Many people with diabetes also have high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol and are overweight. This increases their risk even more. While diabetes is treatable, the presence of the disease still increases your risk of stroke.
* **Carotid or other artery disease —** The carotid arteries in your neck supply blood to your brain. A carotid artery narrowed by fatty deposits from atherosclerosis (plaque buildups in artery walls) may become blocked by a blood clot. Carotid artery disease is also called carotid artery stenosis.
* **Peripheral artery disease** is the narrowing of blood vessels carrying blood to leg and arm muscles. It's caused by fatty buildups of plaque in artery walls. People with [peripheral artery disease](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/More/PeripheralArteryDisease/Peripheral-Artery-Disease_UCM_002082_SubHomePage.jsp) have a higher risk of carotid artery disease, which raises their risk of stroke.
* **Atrial fibrillation** — This [heart rhythm disorder](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/Arrhythmia/AboutArrhythmia/Atrial-Fibrillation_UCM_302027_Article.jsp) raises the risk for stroke. The heart's upper chambers quiver instead of beating effectively, which can let the blood pool and clot. If a clot breaks off, enters the bloodstream and lodges in an artery leading to the brain, a stroke results.
* **Other heart disease** — People with coronary heart disease or [heart failure](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/HeartFailure/Heart-Failure_UCM_002019_SubHomePage.jsp) have a higher risk of stroke than those with hearts that work normally. [Dilated cardiomyopathy](http://www.strokeassociation.org/idc/groups/heart-public/%40wcm/%40hcm/documents/downloadable/ucm_312224.pdf) (an enlarged heart), heart valve disease and some types of [congenital heart defects](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/CongenitalHeartDefects/Congenital-Heart-Defects_UCM_001090_SubHomePage.jsp) also raise the risk of stroke.
* **Sickle cell disease** (also called **sickle cell anemia**) — This is a genetic disorder that mainly affects African-American and Hispanic children. "Sickled" red blood cells are less able to carry oxygen to the body's tissues and organs. These cells also tend to stick to blood vessel walls, which can block arteries to the brain and cause a stroke.
* **High blood cholesterol —** People with [high blood cholesterol](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/Cholesterol/Cholesterol_UCM_001089_SubHomePage.jsp) have an increased risk for stroke. Also, it appears that low HDL (“good”) cholesterol is a risk factor for stroke in men, but more data are needed to verify its effect in women.
* **Poor diet —** [Diets](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/GettingHealthy/NutritionCenter/Nutrition-Center_UCM_001188_SubHomePage.jsp) high in saturated fat, trans fat and cholesterol can raise blood cholesterol levels. Diets high in sodium (salt) can contribute to increased blood pressure. Diets with excess calories can contribute to obesity. Also, a diet containing five or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day may reduce the risk of stroke.
* **Physical inactivity and obesity** — Being [inactive](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/GettingHealthy/PhysicalActivity/Physical-Activity_UCM_001080_SubHomePage.jsp), [obese](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/GettingHealthy/WeightManagement/Weight-Management_UCM_001081_SubHomePage.jsp) or both can increase your risk of high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, diabetes, heart disease and stroke. So go on a brisk walk, take the stairs, and do whatever you can to make your life more active. Try to get a total of at least 30 minutes of activity on most or all days.

**OTHER LITTLE-KNOWN RISK FACTORS FOR STROKE:**

* **Geographic location** — Strokes are more common in the southeastern United States than in other areas.  These are the so-called "stroke belt" states.
* **Socioeconomic factors** — There's some evidence that strokes are more common among low-income people than among more affluent people.
* **Alcohol abuse** — Alcohol abuse can lead to multiple medical complications, including stroke.  For those who consume alcohol, a recommendation of no more than two drinks per day for men and no more than one drink per day for nonpregnant women best reflects the state of the science for alcohol and stroke risk.
* **Drug abuse** — Drug addiction is often a chronic relapsing disorder associated with a number of societal and health-related problems.  Drugs that are abused, including [cocaine](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/Cocaine_UCM_428537_Article.jsp), amphetamines and heroin, have been associated with an increased risk of stroke.  Strokes caused by drug abuse are often seen in a younger population.

**SPOKESPERSON INFORMATION:**

Dr. Shah was born and raised in Allentown, Pennsylvania. His family moved to Michigan after high school and he earned a B.S. in Biology with Highest Distinction from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor (1997) and was elected to the Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society. He received his M.D. from the Wayne State University School of Medicine (2002) and graduated at the top of his class. He was elected to the Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society in his sophomore year.

After medical school, Dr. Shah completed a one year internship in internal medicine at the prestigious Massachusetts General Hospital affiliated with the Harvard Medical School (2003). He then traveled to Los Angeles and completed his Neurology Residency at UCLA (2003-2006). After Neurology training, Dr. Shah completed a 2 year Stroke Fellowship at UCLA’s Comprehensive Stroke and Vascular Neurology Program (2006-2008). In 2008, Dr. Shah and his wife, Shiba moved to Dallas and he entered private practice with the Neurology Consultants of Dallas. He spent 3 years working as a consulting Neuro-Hospitalist at Texas Health Resources Presbyterian Hospital of Dallas. In 2011, Dr. Shah began his second fellowship in Clinical Neurophysiology/Epilepsy at UT Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas.

He maintained ties with the Neurology Consultants of Dallas and will return full time as a Partner in the summer of 2012. He will also become the Director of the Stroke Program at THR Presbyterian Hospital of Dallas (JCAHO certified Primary Stroke Center) at that time and will be charged with leading the development of a certified comprehensive stroke program to serve the citizens of North Texas. He is a member of the American Academy of Neurology and the **American Heart Association/American Stroke Association.** In his free time, Dr. Shah enjoys spending time with his extended family and trying new restaurants in the Dallas area.

**RECENT STUDIES ABOUT STROKE:**

* In a recent study published in August 2011 in *Hypertension: Journal of the American Heart Association*, researchers found that **poor sleep quality increases risk of high blood pressure**. The study found that:
	+ A reduced level of dreamless, deep sleep is a powerful predictor for developing high blood pressure in older men.
	+ High quality sleep is as important to health as diet and exercise.
* In a recent study published in April 2012 in the *Stroke Journal Report*, researchers found that **eating low-fat dairy foods may reduce your risk of stroke.** The study found that:
	+ Eating low-fat dairy foods was associated with a reduced risk of stroke in adult men and women compared to those who ate full-fat dairy foods.
	+ Low-fat dairy is one part of the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) Diet, which effectively reduces blood pressure, a major risk factor for stroke.
* In a recent study published in October 2011 in *Circulation: Journal of the American Heart Association*, researchers found that **insomnia could moderately raise your heart attack risk**. The study found that:
	+ Insomnia was associated with a moderately higher chance of heart attack, according to a Norwegian study.
	+ Patients and healthcare providers should discuss sleep problems and be aware of their connection to heart attack risk.
* In a recent study published in July 2011 in *Circulation: Journal of the American Heart Association*, researchers found that **a regional system to cool cardiac arrest patients improves outcomes**. The study found that:
	+ A regional network of EMS departments and hospitals used a coordinated plan to cool, then gradually re-warm people who had been resuscitated after a cardiac arrest.
	+ This cooling treatment, called therapeutic hypothermia, helped increase the portion of survivors with good brain function, even when they were transferred to the central hospital for care.
* In a recent study published in April 2012 in the *Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes Journal Report*, researchers found that **chest pain patients educated about risk are more likely to opt out of stress tests**. The study found that:
	+ Researchers designed a “decision aid” (visual patient-education tool) for physicians and patients with chest pain to agree on an evaluation without negatively affecting the results of their health care.
	+ Those who used the decision aid were more knowledgeable about heart attack risk and treatment options and were more likely than less aware patients to opt out of stress testing.
* **For the** **most up-to-date information about strokes**, sign up for a free subscription to *Stroke Connection*, a publication of the American Stroke Association. <http://www.strokeassociation.org/STROKEORG/StrokeConnectionMagazine/InStroke-Connection-Magazine_UCM_308575_SubHomePage.jsp>
* **For the latest studies and research on stroke**, check out our learning library at <http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/HealthcareResearch/GetWithTheGuidelinesHFStroke/GetWithTheGuidelinesStrokeHomePage/Get-With-The-Guidelines-Stroke-Case-Studies_UCM_310973_Article.jsp>

**SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGES:**

* **TWITTER**
	+ How can hip hop help save lives? Find out more on May 4 at Noon CST in our #StrokeChat with Terrence J.! [**http://www.eventbrite.com/s/90J9**](http://www.eventbrite.com/s/90J9) **#StrokeMonth(??)**
	+ R U a kid with video production talent? Find out on May 4 at Noon CST in our #StrokeChat with Terrence J.! [**http://www.eventbrite.com/s/90J9**](http://www.eventbrite.com/s/90J9) **#StrokeMonth**
	+ You got questions about the hip hop contest. We’ve got answers! Join us at Noon CST on May 4 for #StrokeChat. [**http://www.eventbrite.com/s/90J9**](http://www.eventbrite.com/s/90J9) **#StrokeMonth**
	+ Hip Hop to Beat Stroke. Ask Terrence J. your ?s at Noon CST on May 4 during #StrokeChat. [**http://www.eventbrite.com/s/90J9**](http://www.eventbrite.com/s/90J9) **#StrokeMonth**
	+ Terrence J. to serve as a judge 4 our hip hop contest. Find out more on May 4 at Noon CST in our #StrokeChat [**http://www.eventbrite.com/s/90J9**](http://www.eventbrite.com/s/90J9) **#StrokeMonth**
	+ How can you become stroke savvy? Ask Dr. Whitfield at Noon CST on May 4 during #StrokeChat. [**http://www.eventbrite.com/s/90J9**](http://www.eventbrite.com/s/90J9) **#StrokeMonth**
	+ Learn about stroke — No. 4 cause of death — during #StrokeChat at Noon CST on May 4 with Dr. Whitfield. [**http://www.eventbrite.com/s/90J9**](http://www.eventbrite.com/s/90J9) **#StrokeMonth**
	+ A stroke occurs every 40 seconds. Spend 60 minutes to learn more at Noon CST on May 4 during #StrokeChat. [**http://www.eventbrite.com/s/90J9**](http://www.eventbrite.com/s/90J9) **#StrokeMonth**
	+ Every 4 minutes someone dies of stroke. Ask about prevention at Noon CST on May 4 during our #StrokeChat. **http://TBD** **#StrokeMonth**
	+ 795K people suffer a stroke per year. Learn your risk at Noon CST on May 4 during our #StrokeChat **http://TBD** **#StrokeMonth**
* **FACEBOOK**
	+ Meet *106 & Park* host and actor Terrence J. at Noon CST on May 4 for an engaging Twitter Party about the American Stroke Association’s Hip Hop Stroke Video Competition for kids in recognition of American Stroke Month. For more information, please go to [**http://hiphopandstroke.eventbrite.com**](http://hiphopandstroke.eventbrite.com).
	+ Do you know any kids ages 10 to 15 who are ready to share their video production talent with America? Join us for a discussion about the American Stroke Association’s Hip Hop Stroke Video Competition in recognition of American Stroke Month with *106 & Park* host and actor Terrence J. and stroke expert Dr. Rani Whitfield “Tha Hip Hop Doc” at Noon CST on May 4. To join, go to [**http://hiphopandstroke.eventbrite.com**](http://hiphopandstroke.eventbrite.com).
	+ Want to learn how a stroke music video can help save lives? Join us for a Twitter Party with *106 & Park* host and actor Terrence J. and stroke expert Dr. Rani Whitfield at Noon. CST on May 4. To find out more about the event, go to [**http://hiphopandstroke.eventbrite.com**](http://hiphopandstroke.eventbrite.com).
	+ Don't forget! Join us for a Twitter Party with *106 & Park* host and actor Terrence J. and stroke expert Dr. Rani Whitfield “Tha Hip Hop Doc” who will discuss the American Stroke Association’s Hip Hop Stroke Video Competition in recognition of American Stroke Month at Noon CST on May 4. We look forward to your questions. To find out more, go to [**http://hiphopandstroke.eventbrite.com**](http://hiphopandstroke.eventbrite.com).
	+ A stroke occurs every 40 seconds. Spend 60 minutes to learn how to prevent it. During a Twitter Party stroke expert Dr. Rani Whitfield “Tha Hip Hop Doc” will discuss your risk and answer your questions in recognition of American Stroke Month at Noon CST on May 4. For more information, go to [**http://hiphopandstroke.eventbrite.com**](http://hiphopandstroke.eventbrite.com).

**ABOUT AMERICAN STROKE ASSOCIATION**

**Created in 1997, the American Stroke Association is dedicated to prevention, diagnosis and treatment to save lives from stroke — America’s No. 4 killer and a leading cause of serious disability. We fund scientific research, help people better understand and avoid stroke, encourage government support, guide healthcare professionals and provide information to enhance the quality of life for stroke survivors. To learn more, call 1-888-4-STROKE or browse**[**strokeassociation.org**](http://www.strokeassociation.org/)**.**

**ABOUT AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION**

The American Heart Association is devoted to saving people from heart disease and stroke – America’s No. 1 and No. 3 killers. We team with millions of volunteers to fund innovative research, fight for stronger public health policies, and provide lifesaving tools and information to prevent and treat these diseases. The Dallas-based association is the nation’s oldest and largest voluntary organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke. To learn more or join us, call 1-800-AHA-USA1 or any of our offices around the country, or visit [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org).

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