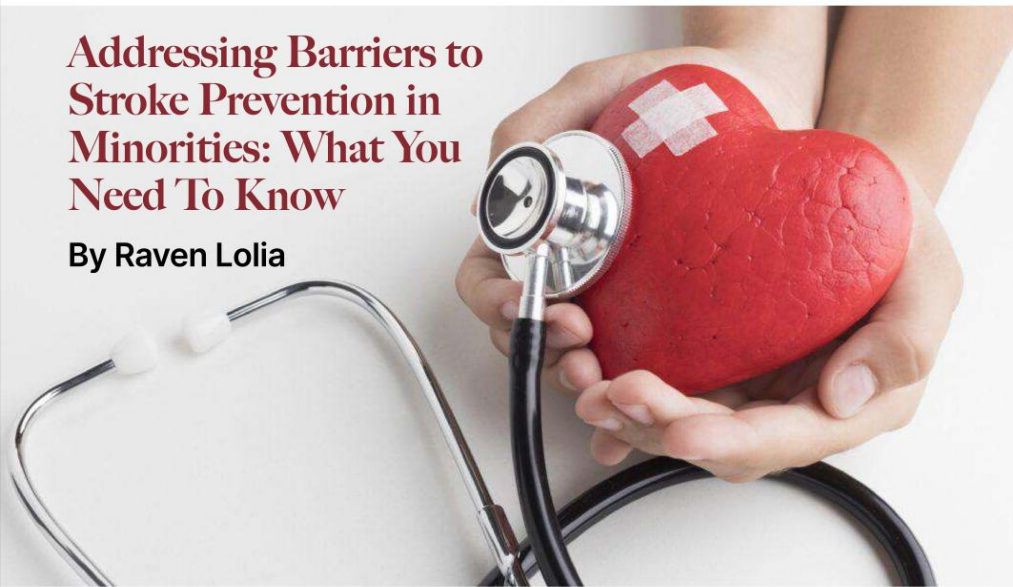


Addressing Barriers to Stroke Prevention in Minorities: What You Need To Know

By Raven Lolia



How can more black people take charge of their health and improve clinical outcomes?

A good start is to acknowledge that certain health conditions such as strokes, pose more of a threat to people of color than others. In line with this, complications of these problems are far more likely to go untreated and prove to be fatal.

Stroke is one of the top life-threatening conditions affecting black Americans today. There are 3 different types of strokes to be aware of.

- **Ischemic Strokes.** Built-up fat and plaque may cause increased cholesterol levels. This along with blood clots; causes a blockage in the vessels of the brain, resulting in ischemic strokes.
- **Hemorrhagic Strokes.** At times, an artery in the brain may burst open, causing bleeding. The blood that has ruptured into the brain will cause pressure on the brain to increase. This is often brought on by elevated blood pressure, head trauma, or high levels of stress.
- **Transient Ischemic Attack (TIA).** The severity of this kind of stroke is less than the abovementioned due to the blockage only lasting for approximately 5 minutes. Considered to be a “mini-stroke” TIAs can lead to more serious strokes in the future.

Who is affected? Those who have high blood pressure, long periods of stress, high cholesterol, smokers, patients with sickle cell anemia, being overweight, and living an inactive lifestyle

What can a person do to lessen the chances of experiencing a stroke?

Arming yourself with information about who is at high risk for stroke and how to prevent it is fundamental.

Many different lifestyle modifications can decrease the likelihood of a stroke occurring. What are some things you can do to minimize your risk?

- Eat foods that are low in salt and saturated fats.
- Quit the use of tobacco.
- Be more physical whether with regular exercise or daily activities.
- Find activities to minimize stress.
- Lose excess weight.

References:

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