



# IN GOOD HEALTH NEWSLETTER...

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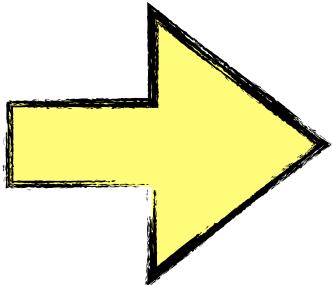
## May: National Stroke Awareness Month

Did you know? Most strokes are preventable. And a large percentage of the ones that happen are treatable with the right care, right away. It's a matter of knowing what to do, taking action and spreading the word.

Use the acronym F.A.S.T. for stroke identification and treatment.

F - Facial droop  
A - Arm weakness  
S - Speech difficulty  
T - Time to call 911

**Spot a Stroke**



[StrokeAssociation.org](http://StrokeAssociation.org)



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## Stroke Risk Factors

A stroke can come as a shock and may feel like an unforgiving, [arbitrary](#) attack on your health and well-being. But a stroke is not completely random. There are certain factors that have been proven to increase stroke risk. They can, however, be detected and managed to substantially reduce your chance of stroke.

### Did You Know?

- Stroke is a leading cause of long-term disability and the leading preventable cause of disability.
- Stroke is the No. 5 cause of death in the United States, killing nearly 130,000 people a year (128,978). That's one in every 20 deaths.

**Mini Strokes or Transient Ischemic Attacks (TIA)** Most people who experience a TIA go on to experience a stroke if the underlying risk factors are left untreated.

**Family History** If you have family members who have had a stroke, you may be at an increased risk due to similar lifestyle habits or hereditary factors.

**Diabetes** Diabetes causes disease of the inner lining of the blood vessels throughout the body, including the heart and brain. This increases [cerebrovascular disease](#) which can lead to a stroke.

**High Blood Pressure** High blood pressure, or hypertension, causes a slowly progressive disease of blood vessels throughout the body, including the heart, the brain, and the carotid arteries

**High Cholesterol** [High cholesterol](#), like hypertension and diabetes, can damage the arteries of the heart, carotid arteries, and brain

**Cerebrovascular Disease** [Cerebrovascular disease](#) is a condition in which the blood vessels that deliver blood to the brain are damaged, narrow, or irregular. This can potentially lead to a stroke if left untreated.

**Coronary Artery Disease** Coronary artery disease (CAD) is when blood vessels of the heart become damaged. CAD may lead to heart attacks which can result in a sudden lack of blood supply to the brain.

**Irregular Heart Beat** An irregular heart beat, or [arrhythmia](#), can contribute to the formation of blood clots. These blood clots may travel to the brain and get trapped in small blood vessels, resulting in [ischemic stroke](#).

**Heart Failure** After a heart attack or as a result of excess strain on the heart, the heart muscle becomes weakened, making it difficult to pump blood efficiently.

**Heart Valve Disease** Heart Valve Disease can cause changes in the blood flow throughout the body, increasing the risk of blood clot formation and potentially leading to ischemic stroke.

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# Stroke Risk Factors

**Carotid Artery Disease** The blood vessels in the neck are carotid arteries. If they are narrow or irregular, they can form blood clots that may travel to and lodge in the blood vessels of the brain.

**Congenital Heart Defects** Heart defects that are present at birth can cause a wide variety of problems, including stroke.

**Bleeding Disorders** [Bleeding disorders](#) are a group of diseases that have the inability to form a proper blood clot in common. This leads to excessive and prolonged bleeding in any part of the body, including the brain, after any type of injury.

**Blood Clotting Disorders** When blood clotting is abnormal, it can predispose the formation of blood clots. In turn, blood clots form in the blood vessels and travel and lodge in the brain or elsewhere in the body.

**Sickle Cell Anemia** Sickle cell anemia is a genetic disorder of the red blood cells. Those abnormal cells are rigid and can stick to the walls of the cerebral blood vessels causing a stroke.

**Pregnancy** For some women, pregnancy can increase the risk of blood clotting. There is a mildly increased risk of [stroke during pregnancy](#).

**Autoimmune Disease** If you have been diagnosed with an autoimmune disease such as [lupus](#), [psoriasis](#) or [alopecia areata](#), there is a mildly increased risk of stroke and other blood clotting events.

**Obesity** obese people are more likely to have a stroke when compared to non-obese individuals who have comparable blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar.

**Stress & Mood** Stress is the emotion most significantly associated with an increased stroke risk due to its effect on blood flow, blood pressure, and hormones throughout the body.

**Smoking** [Smoking](#) is one of the most damaging controllable risk factors for stroke. Yet, the most surprising fact is that the damage incurred to the body through smoking gradually reverses if exposure to smoking is discontinued.

**Recreational/Illegal Drugs** A variety of recreational drugs can produce physiological changes in the body that lead to stroke. Cocaine and [methamphetamine](#) are both highly addictive substances that lead to stroke.

**Cancer** [Cancer](#) can increase the chance of stroke and can also increase the risk of infection, inflammation, and blood clotting problems—all factors that can lead to a stroke.



## Strategies to Reverse Your Stroke Risk

If you are at high risk of stroke, that doesn't necessarily mean that you are locked into a fate of having a stroke. The most common **stroke risk factors** are reversible, and you can reduce your chances of having a stroke with medical management and a few simple lifestyle habits.

**Control Your Diabetes**

**Get Medical Attention for Your Heart Disease**

**Maintain a Healthy Blood Pressure**

**Discontinue Use of Illegal Drugs**

**Stop Smoking**

**Maintain a Healthy Blood Pressure**

**Get Your Blood Triglyceride And Cholesterol Levels to Normal**

**Get Physically Active**

**Manage Your Stress Level**

**Adopt a Stroke Prevention Diet**

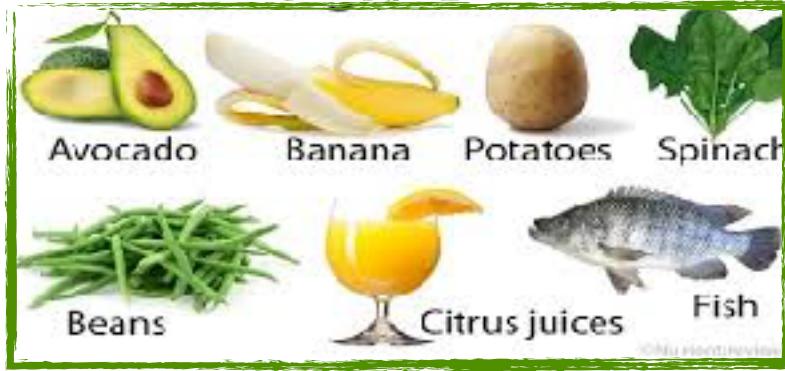
## The Best Diet to Prevent Stroke

**Scratch the sodium from your diet:** To prevent a stroke, opt for a low-sodium diet of fresh foods you prepare yourself without adding salt. Skip processed and packaged foods notorious for their high salt content

**Pick Healthier Protein Sources:** Lentils, nuts, and seeds are good sources of protein as well as other nutrients and fiber. Lean is the operative word when choosing meat, since your liver makes more cholesterol when you eat saturated fat, according to the [American Heart Association](#), and limiting cholesterol is important in preventing stroke.

### Add More Fruits and Vegetables to Your Diet:

For every additional 200 gm (about 7 ounces) of fruit you eat each day, you might decrease your stroke risk by 32 percent. And your stroke risk could drop by 11 percent for every additional 200 gm of [vegetables you eat](#) too indicates a study [published in the journal Stroke](#).



**Focus on Fiber in Your Diet:** Whole grains, nuts, seeds, fruits, and vegetables are excellent sources of fiber, and that may aid in prevention, according to a [stroke study published](#) in the March 2013 issue of Stroke.

**Power Up Your Potassium Intake:** People with the highest daily consumption of the mineral potassium were 27 percent less likely to have an ischemic stroke. White and sweet potatoes, white beans, spinach, bananas, and fish are [potassium-rich additions](#) to your diet to help prevent [stroke](#).

**Try the Mediterranean Diet:** Following the mostly plant-based Mediterranean diet could decrease your risk by 30 percent, according to a [stroke study published in the April 2013 issue of the New England Journal of Medicine](#). This diet focuses on fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, potatoes, nuts, and seeds.

**Avoid Heavy Drinking, Using Drugs, and Smoking:** Excessive alcohol consumption puts you at higher risk of having a stroke. A study published in the January 2015 issue of Stroke noted that [heavy drinking could lead to a stroke](#) an average of five years sooner than in people who don't over-indulge. Cocaine can cause spasms of the blood vessels and lead to heart attack and stroke, and [Using tobacco](#) can cause a stroke; [cigarettes can increase blood clotting](#) and spasms in the blood vessels and damage cells lining the blood vessels.

# MEDITERRANEAN FISH FILLETS



## Ingredients

- 2 large tomatoes, cored and sliced into 1/4-inch rounds
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 tablespoons capers, rinsed
- 1 1/2 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/4 cup reduced-fat feta cheese
- 1 medium zucchini, trimmed and thinly sliced into rounds
- 4 white fish fillets (4 ounces each)
- 1/2 teaspoon salt-free lemon pepper seasoning blend

**Number of Servings: 4**

## Directions

Set the best 4 tomato slices aside. Chop the remaining tomatoes into small cubes. Place the tomato cubes into a bowl and add the onion, capers, balsamic vinegar, olive oil and feta cheese. Stir to mix.

Place the oven rack in the upper position and heat broiler to high. Line two rimmed baking sheets with aluminum foil and spray with cooking spray. Place zucchini rounds in a single layer on one baking sheet and fish fillets on the other sheet. Spray the top sides with cooking spray.

Place the zucchini under the broiler for about 1 minute. Turn and season with half the lemon pepper. Broil for another minute and move the baking sheet to the bottom of the oven to keep warm.

Place the fish fillets under the broiler for about 3 minutes. Turn and continue broiling until the fillets spring back to light pressure, about 3 to 6 minutes. Cooking time will depend on the thickness of the fillets. Season with the remaining lemon pepper.

Place 1 slice of tomato on each of four plates.

Arrange zucchini in an overlapping circle on top of the tomatoes. Place a fish fillet on the zucchini and top with the diced tomato mixture.

## Nutritional Analysis Per Serving

**Serving Size: 1 Fillet with vegetables**

- Calories: 236
- Total Fat: 12 grams
- Saturated Fat: 2 grams
- Trans Fat: 0 grams
- Monounsaturated: 5 grams
- Cholesterol: 71mg
- Sodium: 249mg
- Total Carbohydrate: 9g
- Dietary fiber: 2g
- Added sugars: 6g
- Protein: 24g
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**Mayoclinic.org**