

Diabetes Singapore

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AVOIDING A STROKE IN TIME SAVES LIVES

The four-yearly contagion is on. For a month or so, the world is at a virtual standstill. The shopping malls and restaurants are deserted, come football time. Yes, it is the FIFA World Cup Pandemic. Whether you are a fanatic who breathes, lives and talks football for a month or you think of the game as just "22 silly men running after a silly ball", there is no denying its impact. Yes, its aftermath has included broken marriages, suicides, murders, heart attacks and even strokes. So, if you have diabetes or are at risk, you will do well to check out this "stroke" issue. The ball is in your court.

On a sombre note, this "stroke" issue is an emotive one. My own dad passed on from a stroke three years ago. I remember all too well how he collapsed suddenly before my eyes one night while my mum and I were with him. I had to climb onto the hospital bed and resuscitate him while the presumably overstretched on-call doctor took a full 15 minutes before coming by. My dad lived on for another year or so before another stroke fell him. He remained alert but was robbed of his mobility and his speech. I wonder sometimes if I should have done what I did but that is another issue.

While we cannot help certain risks factors like age or/and race, knowing and controlling these nine avoidable and modifiable risk factors for strokes will help you or your family members reduce the risk of a stroke. A stitch in time saves nine indeed.

AVOIDABLE AND POTENTIALLY MODIFIABLE RISK FACTORS FOR STROKES

1. High blood pressure
2. Diabetes
3. High cholesterol
4. Smoking
5. Obesity
6. Certain heart disease (such as atrial fibrillation)
7. Intravenous drug abuse
8. Carotid or neck artery disease
9. Certain blood disorders



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