

# Can Stress Cause a Stroke?

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Can stress cause a stroke? The short answer is yes, chronic, long-term stress can eventually lead to a stroke.

In this article we will dive deep into the details and analyze the link between stress and stroke, how stress affects critical *stroke risk factors*, and what some of the major *stress factors* are.

## The Link between Stress and Stroke Risk

Are you a quick-tempered, impatient, aggressive, or hostile person? If so, you have a higher risk of stroke than those who are calm and patient.

Do you live with chronic, long-term stress? If so, your risk of stroke increases **four-fold**, according to [WebMD](#). Yikes! That's certainly a wake-up call to start managing chronic stress.

# How Stress Can Cause a Stroke

Living with chronic, long-term stress contributes to a large number of stroke risk factors; and when your stroke risk factors worsen, your risk of stroke increases as well. Here are some stroke risk factors that are aggravated by chronic stress:

- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Artery disease (atherosclerosis)
- Heart disease
- Smoking

If you're thinking to yourself, "Wow, all of these factors are worsened by stress?" Yes. It's a scary reality to face, but long-term stress can lead to these potentially stroke-inducing conditions. Here's how:

**Stress hormones** increase blood pressure, and when those hormones are around long-term, it can lead to high blood pressure, the leading cause of stroke.

Stress hormones are also known to **lead** to diabetes, atherosclerosis, and heart disease – which are all stroke risk factors.

Stress also causes blood sugar levels to **increase**, potentially leading to diabetes and high cholesterol – more stroke risk factors. And lastly, smoking is a common coping mechanism for dealing with stress and it's also one of the leading causes of stroke.

Now let's discuss the major stress factors that contribute to chronic stress and affect your risk of stroke.

## The 5 Major Stress Factors

Researchers who conducted a study on the effects of [stress and stroke](#) measured chronic stress in 5 major areas:

- Personal health problems
- Health problems in others close to the patient
- Job or ability to work
- Relationships
- Finances

Use this list to assess where your chronic stress is coming from.

Are your finances stressing you out? If so, then take some time to sit down and create a budget and a plan for paying off any debt. Removing the uncertainty from the situation can help alleviate stress. Are there a few toxic relationships in your life that completely stress you out? Reflect on them and decide if you need those relationships in your life. If you realize you might be better off without them, then cutting ties might be the best decision *for your health*. So take some time to identify where any chronic, long-term stress is coming from and then start taking actions to reduce that stress and your risk of stroke.