

Black Stroke Victims Face Lower Survival Rates Despite Overall Improvement

Black people are about 20% more likely to die within five years after an ischemic stroke compared with white people, new research shows.

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Although Americans who have had a [stroke](#) are now more likely to survive long term, Black people still face disparities in survival, according to a new study [published in Neurology](#).

The study utilized data from a five-county region in Cincinnati, which can be considered a microcosm of the general American population, according to study coauthor David Robinson, MD, MS, an assistant professor of neurology and rehabilitation medicine at the University of Cincinnati.

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) includes [stroke](#), [heart attack](#), [heart failure](#) and [high blood pressure](#), or [hypertension](#), among other conditions. CVD is the leading cause of [death](#) for all U.S. adults, but some groups carry a heavier burden. For example, 47% of Black adults have been diagnosed with CVD, compared with 36% of white adults, according to the [Cleveland Clinic](#).

For the current study, rates of stroke death and survival were tracked since 1993.

According to a [University of Cincinnati news release](#), the data showed that the rate of death within five years for people who had an ischemic stroke, the most common type of stroke, decreased from 53% in 1993 to 48.3% in 2015.

Despite an overall improvement, Black people were about 20% more likely to die within five years after an ischemic stroke compared with white people.

What's more, people who had a less common, more severe type of stroke called an intracerebral

hemorrhage saw no improvement in five-year survival.

“The data suggests that we have specific interventions in the care of stroke that are disproportionately improving mortality” for people with ischemic strokes compared with hemorrhagic strokes.

Robinson said that overall improvements for five-year stroke survival may be partially attributed to the stroke systems of care set up in Cincinnati that offer new treatments and comprehensive care.

Robinson noted that more people surviving strokes means more people are likely living with disabilities caused by their stroke, emphasizing the need for improved rehabilitation services.

“If we’re helping people survive more, we’re going to have to come up with better treatments to help them with their disability, and that’s a big focus of our rehab group here, which I think is critical,” Robinson said in the news release.

In related news, two [companion papers by American Heart Association](#) (AHA) researchers published this year predict a significant increase in conditions related to cardiovascular disease in the United States by 2050.

The AHA projects that Black people will have the highest prevalence of obesity, hypertension and diabetes. Black adults are also projected to have the highest prevalence of inadequate sleep and poor diet, which are risk factors for heart disease.

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