

Brain Care Score Predicts Stroke Risk Across Racial Groups

The Brain Care Score could have meaningful benefits for stroke prevention among Black adults, who experience strokes at a high rate.

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The McCance Brain Care Score (BCS), which assesses modifiable risk factors for neurological disorders, is a good predictor of stroke risk across racial groups, according to an [observational study by Mass General Brigham](#).

Developed by the McCance Center for Brain Health, the BCS is a [21-point scale](#) that assesses and summarizes information from physical, lifestyle and social-emotional risk factors for neurological disorders. For example, BCS gathers information on blood pressure, nutrition, social relationships, stress and alcohol use. The higher the score, the lower the risk is of age-related brain disease, such as [stroke](#) and [dementia](#).

"The Brain Care Score integrates physical, lifestyle and social-emotional factors into one measure of [brain health](#)," said first study author, Evy Reinders, MD, a postdoctoral fellow in the release. "Our analyses suggest that improving everyday behaviors could yield particularly large benefits for groups at higher risk of stroke, such as Black adults."

For the study, [published in Neurology](#), researchers analyzed data on nearly 10,900 Black and white adults in the Reasons for Geographic and Racial Differences in Stroke (REGARDS) study who had never had a stroke.

After a median follow-up period of about 16 years, participants in both racial groups with higher scores had significantly lower risks of stroke. What's more, for every five-point increase in their score, Black adults reduced their risk by 53% compared with a 25% lower risk in white adults.

"Black adults in the United States face a two- to threefold higher risk of stroke compared to white adults," said senior author Sanjula Dhillon Singh, MD, PhD, MS, a principal investigator in the Brain

Care Labs at Mass General Brigham. “Our findings show that the Brain Care Score provides a practical framework to better understand and address this disparity—by identifying modifiable behaviors that lower stroke risk.”

To learn your brain care score, [go here](#). To learn about ways to improve your score and browse resources for improving brain health, including ways to lower blood pressure, improve diet, limit alcohol and reduce stress, [go here](#).

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