

# Wellness Wednesday



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## 7 Crucial Steps to Prevent Stroke

Strokes are a leading cause of death and disability in the United States. The good news is that about 80% of strokes are preventable through lifestyle changes and risk factor management. In this article, we will explore the expert advice of stroke doctors on the seven crucial steps you should take to lower your risk of having a stroke. By implementing these strategies, you can safeguard your health and well-being.

### 1. Stay Active and Avoid a Sedentary Lifestyle

Leading a sedentary lifestyle is a modifiable risk factor for stroke onset. Spending too much time sitting or lying down and not enough time engaging in physical activity can increase your risk. Regular physical activity is vital in keeping your blood vessels clear and preventing the buildup of plaque in the arteries.

Dr. Arthur Wang, director of endovascular neurosurgery at Tulane University School of Medicine, emphasizes the importance of regular exercise. He recommends getting at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise five times a week. Engaging in activities like walking, running, biking, gardening, or joining a group workout class can help you stay active and reduce your risk of strokes.

### 2. Manage Your Blood Pressure

High blood pressure is the leading modifiable risk factor for stroke onset. Dr. Anthony Kim, a vascular neurologist and medical director of the University of California at San Francisco Stroke Center, highlights the significance of blood pressure management in stroke prevention. Lowering your blood pressure can significantly reduce your risk of strokes.

Regular check-ups with your primary care doctor are essential for monitoring your blood pressure and other risk factors. Oftentimes, high blood pressure does not present noticeable symptoms, making routine screening tests crucial. If you have high blood pressure, working with your healthcare provider to manage it through medication, lifestyle changes, and dietary modifications is essential.



### 3. Quit Smoking

Smoking is a detrimental habit that significantly increases the risk of stroke and heart disease. The chemicals present in tobacco smoke can cause the blood vessels to narrow over time, leading to blockages in blood flow to the brain. Dr. Kim strongly advises against smoking and highlights the importance of quitting to reduce the risk of a stroke.

If you are a smoker, seek support from healthcare professionals and explore available resources to help you quit. Quitting smoking not only reduces your risk of a stroke but also improves your overall health and well-being.

### 4. Limit Alcohol Consumption

Excessive alcohol consumption is associated with an increased risk of heart disease and stroke. While moderate alcohol intake may have some health benefits, it is crucial to stay within recommended limits. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines excessive drinking as consuming more than four drinks in one sitting for women or five drinks in one sitting for men.

It is generally recommended that women should not have more than one alcoholic drink per day, and men should not have more than two. By moderating your alcohol intake, you can reduce your risk of having a stroke and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

### 5. Follow a Healthy Diet

Maintaining a healthy diet is essential for managing stroke risk factors. Avoiding foods high in saturated fats, sugar, and salt can significantly contribute to stroke prevention. High salt intake, in particular, is associated with elevated blood pressure, which is a major risk factor for strokes.

Author and journalist Michael Pollan's advice to "eat food, mostly plants, not too much" is a valuable guideline for a healthy diet. Emphasize fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats in your meals. By adopting a balanced and nutritious diet, you can promote optimal health and reduce the risk of having a stroke.

### 6. Attend Regular Check-Ups and Screenings

Regular check-ups with your primary care doctor are crucial for identifying and managing stroke risk factors. Many risk factors, such as high cholesterol and high blood pressure, do not present noticeable symptoms. Routine screenings and tests are necessary to detect these risk factors early.

During check-ups, your doctor will assess your blood pressure, cholesterol levels, blood sugar, and weight. They will also consider any personal or family history of strokes or other cardiovascular conditions. By staying vigilant and proactive about your health, you can take necessary steps to prevent stroke onset.

### 7. Recognize the Signs of Stroke and Seek Immediate Treatment

Recognizing the signs of stroke and seeking immediate medical attention is vital for minimizing the potential damage. Stroke treatments are most effective when administered promptly. Remember the acronym FAST: Facial drooping, Arm weakness, Speech difficulty, and Time to call 9-1-1.

If you or someone around you experiences any of these symptoms suddenly, it may indicate a stroke. Acting quickly and calling for emergency medical services can make a significant difference in the outcome. Stay informed about the signs of stroke and educate those around you to promote a swift response in case of an emergency.



# HEALTHY CHICKEN NUGGETS



## INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 pounds of 93% lean ground chicken (organic preferred)
- 2/3 cup of frozen cauliflower rice
- 1 teaspoon of kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon of onion powder
- 1 teaspoon of garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon of black pepper
- 1 large egg, beaten
- 3/4 cup of seasoned breadcrumbs (or gluten-free seasoned crumbs)
- Dipping sauce of your choice (ketchup, honey mustard, buffalo sauce, etc.)

In terms of equipment, you will need a large bowl for mixing the ingredients, a baking sheet if you choose to bake the nuggets, and an air fryer if you prefer the air frying method.

Chicken nuggets are a fun, favorite for both kids and adults alike. However, store-bought chicken nuggets often contain unhealthy ingredients and are deep-fried, which can be detrimental to our health. By using ground chicken and incorporating hidden veggies, we can create a nutritious alternative that is crispy on the outside and juicy on the inside.

## Kid-Friendly and Versatile

One of the great advantages of homemade chicken nuggets is their kid-friendly nature. Picky eaters will love these nuggets, and they won't even realize that hidden veggies are packed inside. They can be served as a main dish for lunch or dinner, or even as a snack.

Experiment with different dipping sauces! Whether it's ketchup, honey mustard, buffalo sauce, or BBQ sauce, there are endless possibilities to enhance the flavor of your homemade chicken nuggets.

## Nutrition Information

Serving: 6 nuggets, Calories: 280 kcal, Carbohydrates: 13 g, Protein: 28 g, Fat: 13 g, Saturated Fat: 3.5 g, Cholesterol: 154.5 mg, Sodium: 670.5 mg, Fiber: 1.5 g, Sugar: 1.5 g





## INSTRUCTIONS



### Step 1: Form the Chicken Mixture

In a large bowl, combine the ground chicken, frozen cauliflower rice, kosher salt, onion powder, garlic powder, and black pepper. Mix well until all the ingredients are evenly incorporated. By adding cauliflower rice, you're not only sneaking in some extra nutrition but also ensuring that the nuggets stay moist and flavorful.

### Step 2: Bread the Nuggets

Prepare two shallow bowls - one with beaten egg and the other with seasoned breadcrumbs. Take a small portion of the chicken mixture and shape it into a small, round, and flat nugget. Dip the nugget into the beaten egg, ensuring it is fully coated, then transfer it to the bowl of breadcrumbs. Coat the nugget with breadcrumbs, pressing gently to ensure they adhere evenly. Repeat this process for the remaining chicken mixture.

### Step 3: Air Fryer Method

If you're using an air fryer, preheat it to 400°F. Place the breaded nuggets in a single layer in the air fryer basket. Spray the tops of the nuggets with oil to promote browning and crispiness. Air fry the nuggets for 8 to 9 minutes, flipping them halfway through the cooking process. Spray the other side with oil and continue cooking until the nuggets are golden and cooked through.

### Step 3: Baking Method

If you prefer to bake the nuggets, preheat your oven to 450°F. Place the breaded nuggets on a baking sheet that has been sprayed with oil to prevent sticking. Spray the tops of the nuggets with oil for a crispy exterior. Bake the nuggets for 10 minutes, then flip them over and bake for an additional 6 minutes until they are golden brown and cooked through.

## FEATURED EXERCISE

<https://www.self.com/story/tone-it-up-bodyweight-hiit>

## Featured Exercise ► Wall Sit



- You'll need a wall or door frame to complete this exercise.
- Stand with your back against a wall and engage abs to push lower back against wall.
- Walk feet out until you lower so that knees are bent to 90 degrees, and your back is still completely pressed against wall.
- Hold this position with core engaged. Hands can rest on your thighs, extend from chest height, or you can place your hands on your hips.

Rest  
x 15 seconds

Push-Up  
x 30 seconds

Are you ready to transform your lower body and strengthen your legs? Look no further than the wall sit exercise! This simple yet effective move offers a multitude of benefits that will have you jumping for joy. First and foremost, the wall sit is fantastic for building strength in your quadriceps, hamstrings, and glutes.



[Click here to view online!](#)

*Regular exercise can help you control your weight, reduce your risk of heart disease, and strengthen your bones and muscles. But if it's been awhile since you've exercised and you have health issues or concerns, it's a good idea to talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise routine.*



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