



Daily Burger, Fries: A Recipe for Stroke Fat, Salt Make Big Impact on Stroke Risk

By [Peggy Peck](#)
WebMD Medical News

Reviewed By [Michael Smith](#)
on Friday, February 04, 2005

Feb. 3, 2005 (New Orleans) -- Eating a double cheeseburger and a large order of french fries every day can increase the risk of stroke by 65%, research shows. Researchers say that menu selection contains about 65 grams of fat.

Researchers also found that 4,000 mg of sodium from salt a day increases stroke risk by nearly 90%.

Though it may seem impossible to eat that much salt, Armistead D. Williams III, MD, tells WebMD that it "is quite easy. A personal pizza, for instance, contains at least 2,400 mg of sodium." In his study, 20% of the participants ate more than 4,000 mg of sodium daily.

While most people know that obesity is a major problem in the U.S., this is one of the few studies to actually show a relationship between diet and stroke, Ralph Sacco, MD, tells WebMD.

Stroke is the third leading cause of death in the U.S. And stroke leaves many others with disabling problems, such as paralysis or inability to speak clearly.

Sacco's ongoing study involves more than 3,100 men and women. Sacco, professor of neurology and epidemiology at Columbia University in New York, and his colleagues reported the findings Wednesday at the American Stroke Association International Stroke Conference 2005.

Halina White, MA, a postgraduate research fellow at Columbia University Medical Center, says, "We used the American Heart Association dietary recommendations for fat intake of approximately 30% of daily calories, which would be 65 grams of fat in a 2,000 calorie-a-day diet," White says.

People that ate the most amount of fat had the highest stroke risk, White tells WebMD. Looking at it another way, those who ate more than the AHA recommended 65 grams of fat had a 64% increase in stroke risk compared with those who ate less than 65 grams of fat.

She says 65 grams of fat "is equal to a large fries and a double cheeseburger."

In a second study, Sacco's group analyzed the effect of salt on stroke risk.

Williams, a neurology resident at Columbia University, says the AHA recommends that sodium intake be limited to 2,400 mg a day, which is a little more than a teaspoon of salt.

Those eating more than 4,000 mg of sodium a day increased their stroke risk by 90% compared with those eating 2,400 mg or less, says Williams.

High salt intake is associated with high blood pressure, and high blood pressure is a risk factor for stroke. But Williams says the increased stroke risk was seen regardless of blood pressure.

Lawrence Brass, MD, professor of neurology at Yale University School of Medicine in New Haven, Conn., tells WebMD that the importance of these findings is not only in the risk reported but also in the empowerment that it gives to patients and families to take control of their own health. "That importance cannot be underestimated."

SOURCES: American Stroke Association International Stroke Conference 2005, New Orleans, Feb. 2-4, 2005. Armistead D. Williams III, MD, Columbia University, New York. Halina White, MA, Columbia University Medical Center. Ralph Sacco, MD, professor of neurology and epidemiology, Columbia University, New York. Lawrence Brass, MD, professor of neurology, Yale University School of Medicine, New Haven, Conn.

© 2005 WebMD Inc. All rights reserved.

This article can be found at the following link:

<https://www.webmdhealth.com/common/content/webmdtopic.aspx?webmdlink=/content/news/webmd/articles/105673.htm>