

Public urged to lead active and healthy lifestyle in support of World Stroke Day

â€œIn support of [World Stroke Day](#), the Department of Health (DH) today (October 29) appealed to members of the public to lead an active and healthy lifestyle to guard against stroke.

World Stroke Day has been designated on October 29 each year by the World Stroke Organization to increase awareness and drive actions on strokes around the world.

A spokesman for the DH said that stroke is one of the major causes of ill health, long-term disability and death. Every year, strokes attack over 12 million people worldwide. In Hong Kong, stroke is the fourth commonest cause of death with 3 048* registered deaths in 2023.

A stroke happens when the blood supply to part of the brain is interrupted, or when the blood vessel of the brain ruptures leading to a haemorrhage. High blood pressure (HT) is the largest single risk for stroke, followed by a high body mass index and high blood glucose.

"Physical activity can modify these common biomedical risk factors of stroke. Epidemiological studies support a beneficial effect of engaging in a sufficient amount of physical activities on stroke risk, whether it is simply walking at a faster pace, bicycling or leisure pursuits," the spokesman added.

Stroke risk can be reduced by adhering to an active and healthy lifestyle. Members of the public are advised to engage in at least 150 to 300 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity or an equivalent amount and intensity of physical activity throughout the week, and limit the amount of time spent being sedentary and replace sedentary time with physical activity of any intensity including a light-intensity physical activity. To further reduce the risk of having a stroke, members of the public should also maintain an optimal body weight and waist circumference, reduce salt intake and eat a balanced diet, avoid smoking and refrain from alcohol drinking to guard against stroke.

With an aim to advocate members of the public to increase their physical activities, the DH launched the "10,000 Steps a Day" Campaign in 2022 to encourage adults to gradually increase their daily step goal to 10 000 based on their own physical conditions, abilities, pace and individual circumstances. The campaign has entered its third phase this year, and this year's event coincides with the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. The Health Bureau and the DH will for the first time partner with Greater Bay Area (GBA) Mainland cities to jointly promote

walking to mark the celebration. In Hong Kong, a walking challenge with the slogan of "Shall We Walk and Talk" will be held through the "e+Life Platform" on November 1 to inspire the public to walk with friends. Participants can use a step-counting mobile application to record their step counts during the challenge period and synchronise the data with the "e+Life Platform". For details, please visit the event website of the Walking Challenge (www.10000stepsaday.hk/?lang=en) and the thematic website of "e+Life Platform" (app.ehealth.gov.hk/elife-overview).

The Primary Care Commission has established the District Health Centre (DHC)/DHC Express across 18 districts and has been proactively promoting the Life Course Preventive Care Plan. The DHC healthcare team would work hand in hand with Family Doctors to help clients to develop customised healthy living plans (including smoking cessation, balance diet, regular physical activity and weight management) based on individuals' health needs at different stages of life, enhancing the public's capability to take care of their own health and prevent strokes.

Apart from active and healthy living, early diagnosis and proper management of hypertension and diabetes is another key to lowering the risk of stroke. The Government launched the Chronic Disease Co-Care Pilot Scheme (CDCC Pilot Scheme) in November 2023, to subsidise Hong Kong residents aged 45 or above with no known medical history of HT or diabetes (DM) to undergo HT and DM screening services in the private healthcare sector. They can then receive long-term follow-up care in the community provided by Family Doctors, DHC /DHC Express, and other healthcare services. For more details, members of the public may browse the dedicated website of the CDCC Pilot Scheme (www.primaryhealthcare.gov.hk/cdcc/en).

In addition to promoting stroke prevention measures, the Government is committed to enhancing services for stroke treatment. The Chief Executive announced in this year's Policy Address that the Hospital Authority would set up the first stroke centre in accordance with the national accreditation standards at a public hospital of Hong Kong. Through cross-specialty and patient-centred integrated neuromedicine services, it aims to enhance the efficiency of diagnosing acute strokes, expedite treatment and improve patient care, thereby lowering mortality rates, hospital bed days and readmission rates as well as improving post-stroke rehabilitation.

The Government will continue to step up efforts in enhancing public awareness about the importance of active and healthy living in the area of stroke prevention and working in close partnership with community partners to build a health-enhancing environment. For details, please visit the thematic website at www.change4health.gov.hk/en/index.html.

*Provisional figure