

Deaths from stroke

Stroke carries a high risk of death. Survivors can experience loss of vision and/or speech, paralysis, and confusion. Historically called “apoplexy”, “stroke” is so called because of the way it strikes people down.

Previous stroke significantly increases risk of further episodes. Certain racial, ethnic and socioeconomic groups are also at greater risk of stroke. The most important modifiable cause of stroke is high blood pressure; for every ten people who die of stroke, four could have been saved if their blood pressure had been regulated. Among those aged under 65, two-fifths of deaths from stroke are linked to smoking. Other modifiable risk factors include unhealthy diet, high salt intake, underlying heart disease, diabetes and high blood lipids.

The risk of death depends on the type of stroke. Transient ischaemic attack or TIA – where symptoms resolve in less than 24 hours – has the best outcome, followed by stroke caused by carotid stenosis (narrowing of the artery in the neck that supplies blood to the brain). Blockage of an artery is more dangerous, with rupture of a cerebral blood vessel the most dangerous of all.

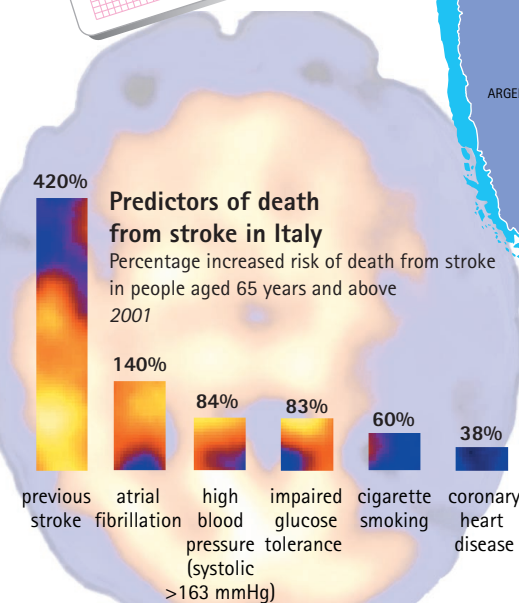
Even where advanced technology and facilities are available, 60% of those who suffer a stroke die or become dependent. Given these dismal statistics and the high cost of treatment of stroke, high priority should be accorded to preventive strategies.



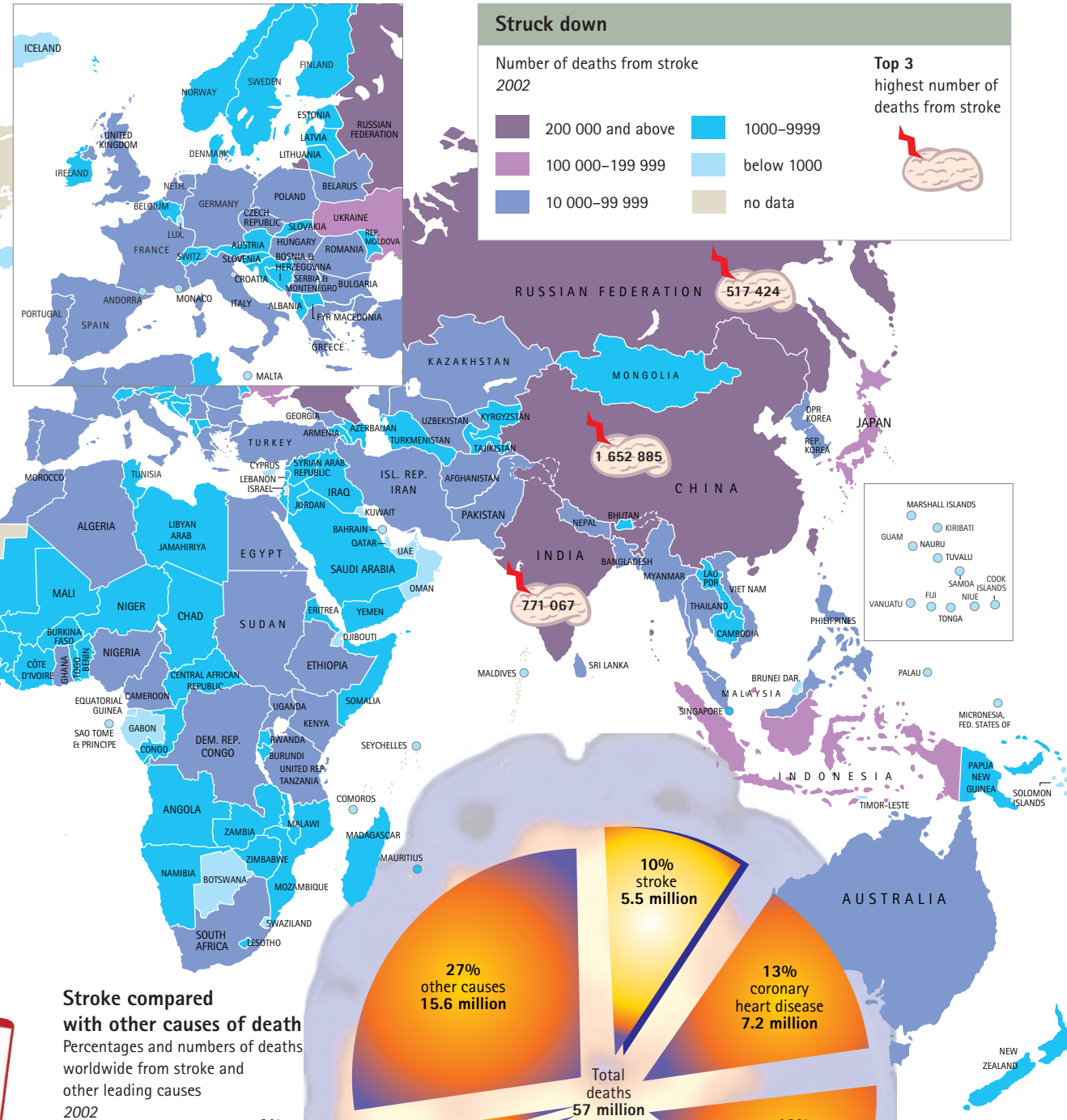
Stroke is the second leading cause of death above the age of 60 years, and the fifth leading cause in people aged 15 to 59 years old.

In the USA, someone dies of a stroke every three minutes.

Worldwide, 3 million women and 2.5 million men die from stroke every year.



Stroke is the third most common cause of death in developed countries, exceeded only by coronary heart disease and cancer.



Stroke compared with other causes of death
Percentages and numbers of deaths worldwide from stroke and other leading causes 2002

