"Healtiful is designed to inspire people to live their healthiest lives, every day, through medically reviewed information and expert health resource. It has comprehensive health information that covers all aspects of a healthy lifestyle like healthy habits, health concerns, preventative care, medical care, seasonal health tips and expert advice. We hope our humble attempt empowers our readers to take up (stay on) a proactive path towards a healthy life.

It is a bi-monthly magazine, so stay tuned for informative & interesting articles, practical tips that will inspire you to prioritize your health and take control of your health."

Diabetes: The Silent Killer

Diabetes is a chronic metabolic disease marked by elevated blood glucose (sugar) levels, which over time can lead to severe complications such as heart disease, damage to blood vessels, kidney failure, nerve damage, blindness, and even lower limb amputation.

India's Diabetes Crisis

India is often called the "Diabetes Capital" of the world, with 77 million people above 18 years suffering from type 2 diabetes and an additional 25 million considered pre diabetic. Alarmingly, over 50% of people with diabetes are unaware of their condition, leading to late diagnosis and complications.

Types of Diabetes

- **Type 1 Diabetes:** Also known as juvenile diabetes/insulin dependent diabetes is a condition where the pancreas produces little or no insulin, typically diagnosed in children or young adults
- **Type 2 Diabetes:** The most common form, where the body either resists insulin or doesn't produce enough. It usually develops in adults and is often linked to lifestyle factors

Healthy Way
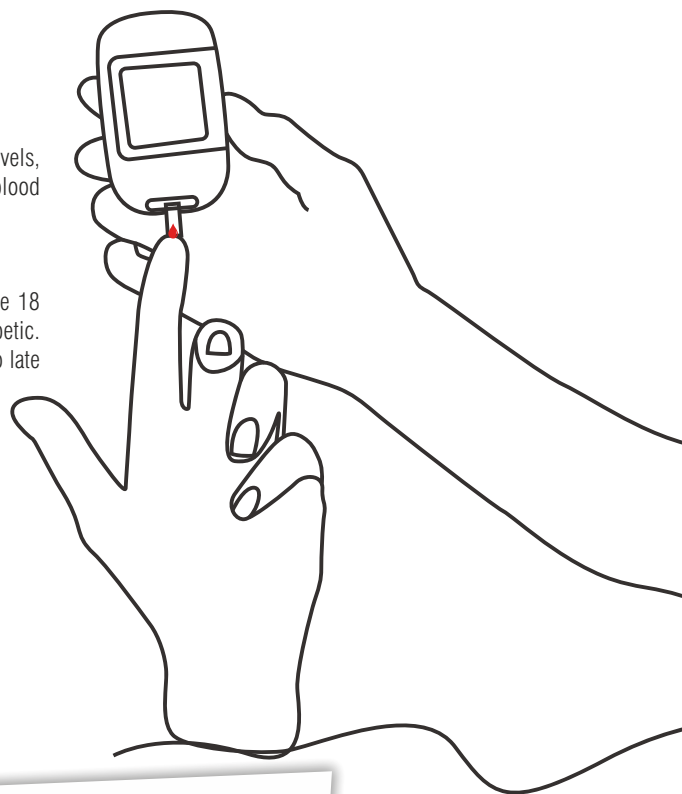
A healthy outside starts from the inside

How Can you Recognize Diabetes

Diabetes symptoms can appear suddenly, especially in type 1. In type 2, symptoms may develop gradually and go unnoticed for years. Common signs include:

- Excessive thirst
- Frequent urination
- Blurred vision
- Fatigue
- Unintentional weight loss

If left untreated, overtime diabetes can severely damage the heart, kidneys, eyes, and nerves, increasing the risk of heart attacks, strokes, and kidney failure.

Prevention
Type 2 diabetes is largely preventable through lifestyle changes. Key steps include:

- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Engaging in at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise daily
- Following a balanced diet, low in sugar and saturated fats
- Avoiding tobacco use

Diet & Diabetes
Make your calories count with nutritious foods. Choose healthy carbohydrates, fiber-rich foods, and "good" fats.

Combating Modern Lifestyle Risks
The fast-paced "hurry, worry, curry" lifestyle-characterized by stress, poor diet, and inactivity-is a major contributor to rising diabetes cases. Embracing healthier habits is essential in reversing this trend. Act now to protect yourself from diabetes and its life-altering complications.

What is an HbA1c test?
HbA1c is a blood test that is used to diagnose type 2 diabetes. It is also used to monitor blood glucose control in people with diabetes.HbA1c is short for glycated haemoglobin.

Less than 5.7%	Normal range
5.7% to 6.4%	Prediabetes
6.5% or Higher	Diabetes

COPD:
A Widespread Breathing Crisis

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is a progressive, irreversible lung condition that leads to severe breathing difficulties. Globally, COPD affects approximately 384 million people and is the third leading cause of death.

Key Causes
The primary cause of COPD is long-term exposure to harmful substances, particularly cigarette smoke, other risk factors include air pollution, occupational exposure to dust and chemicals, and genetic conditions like alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency.

Alarming Symptoms
COPD symptoms often worsen over time and may include:

- Chronic cough (with mucus)
- Shortness of breath during physical activities
- Wheezing
- Chest tightness
- Frequent respiratory infections

Most patients don't seek medical help until the disease has already caused significant lung damage, leading to delayed diagnosis.

Prevention & Treatment
While COPD cannot be cured, it is largely preventable and manageable:

- **Quit Smoking:** The most critical step to prevent and slow COPD. Quitting smoking can reduce disease progression even in late stages
- **Medications:** Bronchodilators and corticosteroids help open airways and reduce inflammation. Long-term oxygen therapy may be necessary in advanced cases
- **Pulmonary Rehabilitation:** A structured program of exercise, education, and support to improve lung function
- **Vaccinations:** Preventing infections, such as influenza and pneumonia, is crucial for COPD patients
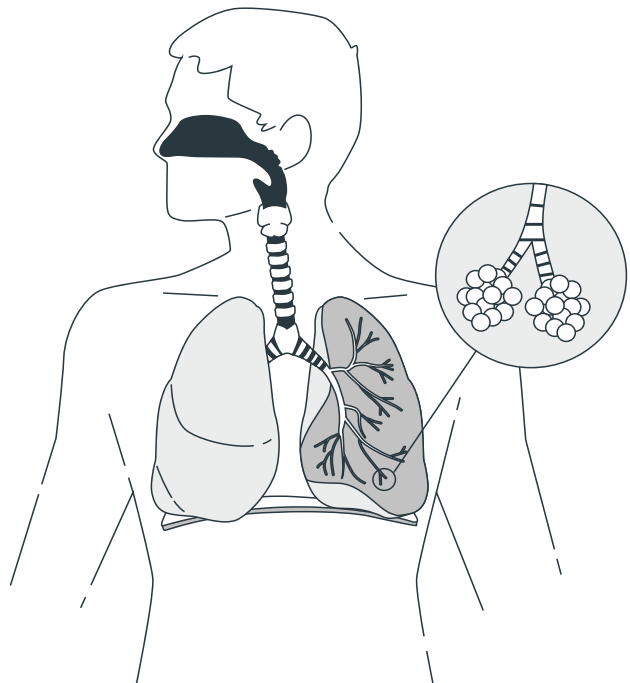
Osteoporosis: The Porous Bone Disease

Osteoporosis, meaning "porous bones," weakens bones and raises the risk of fractures. Bones are strongest around age 30, but gradually lose density. Common risk factors include aging, low body weight, menopause, smoking, and certain medications.

How Bones Work
Bones are made of collagen (a protein providing structure) and calcium phosphate (a mineral that hardens them). Throughout life, bone tissue is constantly renewed, but as we age, bone loss exceeds replacement, weakening the bones.

Who Gets Osteoporosis?
While aging naturally causes bone loss, not everyone develops osteoporosis. Women are more affected, particularly after menopause, with 80% of cases in women. However, osteoporosis is under diagnosed in men, though still pose significant lifestyle changes.

No Symptoms, Silent Threat
Osteoporosis has no obvious symptoms until fractures or posture changes occur. Back pain due to vertebral changes may even be an early warning sign.

Risk Factors
- **Uncontrollable:** Women (especially post-menopausal), people with small frames, Asians, and those with conditions like diabetes or rheumatoid arthritis are at higher risk
- Controllable: Inactivity, smoking, a poor diet low in calcium and vitamin D, excessive alcohol consumption, certain medications (e.g., corticosteroids), and eating disorders increase the risk

Treatment
- Bone-Boosting Medications: Help slow bone loss and reduce fracture risk
- Hormone Therapy: Synthetic calcitonin, given via injection or nasal spray, slows bone thinning and reduces spine fracture risk in post-menopausal women

Osteoporosis is a silent but serious condition. Taking early action through screenings and lifestyle changes can safeguard your bone health and prevent fractures down the road. Prioritize your bone health today to ensure a stronger tomorrow.
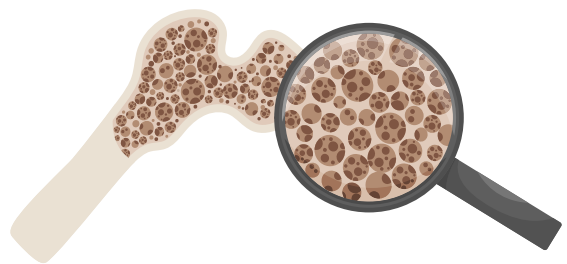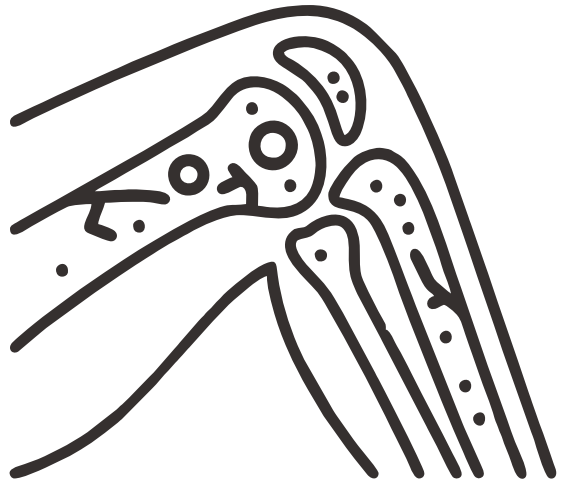
FUN FACT:

Bones are dynamic they are constantly being broken down and rebuilt - about every 10 years, you have a completely new set of bones!

Stroke: Every Second Counts

One in four people over the age of 25 will experience a stroke in their lifetime, making it the second leading cause of death globally. Stroke survivors often face long-term disability, ranging from paralysis to speech and vision loss, creating an immense personal and economic burden. This is why its important to quickly recognize, treat and prevent stroke.

Stroke carries a high risk of death. Survivors experience loss of vision and/or speech, paralysis and confusion. Stroke is so called because of the way it strikes people down. For every 10 people who die of stroke, four could have been saved if their blood pressure had been regulated.

What is a Stroke?

A stroke, or "brain attack," occurs when blood supply to the brain is suddenly interrupted. This deprives the brain of oxygen and nutrients it needs, causing brain cells to die rapidly. According to the World Health Organization, stroke is the second leading cause of death and third leading cause of disability worldwide. When major arteries experience thrombotic or embolic occlusion, specific syndromes can manifest due to reduced blood flow to particular brain regions, which correlates with corresponding examination findings. That's why recognizing the signs early is crucial.
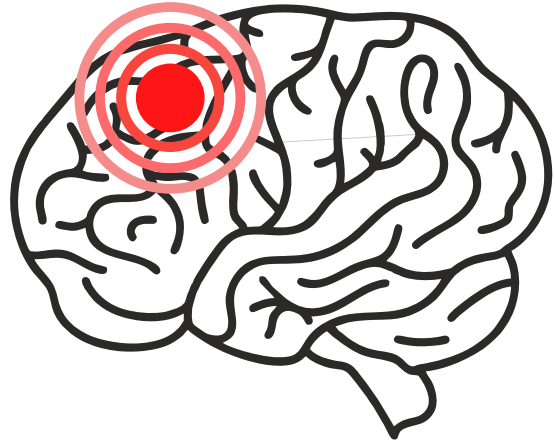
Symptoms of Stroke

- Sudden severe headaches
- Dizziness and difficulty walking
- Confusion or trouble speaking
- Vision problems in one or both eyes
- Numbness in the face, arms, or legs, often on one side

Every minute without treatment costs the patient 4 days of disability-free life and 10 days of functional independence. Recognizing the signs early and seeking immediate medical help is critical. Learn the warning signs of stroke to **B.E. F.A.S.T.** to Save a Life:

- **B**alance issues
- **E**yesight problems
- **F**acial drooping
- **A**rm weakness
- **S**peech difficulties
- **T**ime to call emergency services

Stroke Treatment

Timely treatment is critical in time stroke. There are several ways to treat an ischemic stroke it can be treated by either removing or dissolving a clot.

Medical Management: An intravenous tissue plasminogen activator is often used to break up clots and works best when used soon after the stroke occurs.

Mechanical Thrombectomy: For larger, more complex clots a minimally invasive procedure known as mechanical thrombectomy uses a device to remove the clot.

Key Risk Factors

- High blood pressure - Leading cause of stroke
- High cholesterol - Causes narrowing / blocking of the arteries, stroke, and other problems
- Heart disease - Increases stroke risk
- Diabetes - Affects circulation and blood flow
- Obesity - Linked to high cholesterol and other risk factors
- Smoking - Damages blood vessels, heightening stroke risk

Prevention Tips

- Avoid smoking and secondhand smoke
- Eat a heart-healthy diet, low in fats and sodium
- Exercise regularly
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Limit alcohol intake
- Monitor your blood pressure regularly -120 / 80 mm Hg or below is ideal
- Manage stress and prioritize sleep

The Importance of Regular Checkups

Routine health assessments and screening tests can help identify your stroke risk early. Stay proactive about your health to reduce your chances of being struck by this life-altering condition.

Don't wait - understand your risks, take preventive action, and be ready to act fast.
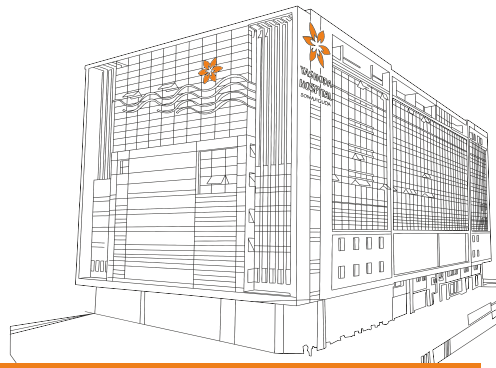
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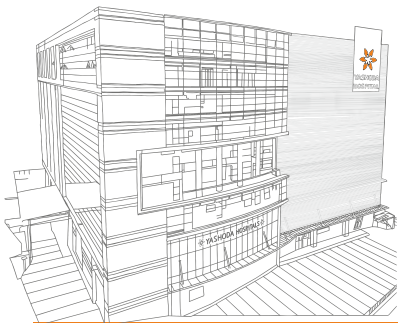
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