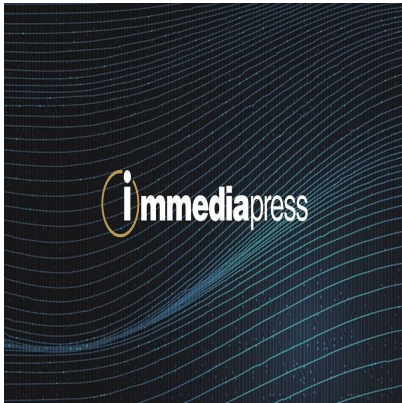




ESOC 2026: Rising stroke rates highlight widening ethnic and socioeconomic inequalities across populations, major study finds

Descrizione

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MAASTRICHT, Netherlands, May 6, 2026 /PRNewswire/ - A new study presented today at the European Stroke Organisation Conference (ESOC) 2026 shows that after decades of decline, stroke incidence is rising again, driven by higher rates in some ethnic minority populations and concentrated among socioeconomically disadvantaged groups.

These findings reflect broader patterns seen in diverse urban populations internationally, pointing to widening health inequalities and highlighting an urgent need to improve uptake of cardiovascular risk programmes across all socioeconomic and ethnic groups.

This 30-year analysis examined how the risk of having stroke varied in different ethnic and socioeconomic groups in a population of 333,000 people in South London, of whom 7,726 had a stroke. After a 34% decrease between 1995-1999 and 2010-2014 (from 198 to 131 cases per 100,000 people), the risk of stroke increased by 13% in 2020-2024.

Although overall trends initially improved, the recent rise was not evenly distributed. In 2020-2024, stroke incidence was more than twice as high in Black African (Incidence Rate Ratio [IRR] 2.31; 95% CI 2.03-2.62) and Black Caribbean (IRR 2.00; 95% CI 1.73-2.31) populations compared with the White population.

Rates remained consistently higher in these groups across the study period, with the highest incidence observed among those experiencing socioeconomic deprivation.

Compared with White participants, Black African and Black Caribbean populations were more likely to have high blood pressure (47% and 29% higher prevalence, respectively) and diabetes (92% and 123% higher, respectively), both of which increase stroke risk. Notably, 12% of Black African patients had no diagnosed risk factors prior to stroke, compared with 6.3% of White patients, suggesting gaps in early detection.

Ethnic inequalities were greatest for intracerebral haemorrhage, a severe and often fatal subtype of stroke, with disparities between Black African, Black Caribbean and White populations being more pronounced than for other stroke subtypes.

Lead researcher, Dr Camila Pantoja-Ruiz from King's College London, stated that these inequalities persisted even after adjusting for clinical severity, socioeconomic status and other clinical factors. Additional analyses found that Black stroke survivors, particularly Black African survivors, were less likely to receive timely follow-up care, with Black African survivors having 34% lower odds of follow-up.

Additionally, Black African populations were found to experience stroke around 10-12 years earlier than White populations on average. These findings highlight the need for earlier prevention and targeted interventions.

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