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## June is Stroke Awareness Month – Get your blood pressure checked

CALGARY – June is stroke awareness month, an opportunity for Albertans to learn about strokes and their warning signs, as well as how to reduce the odds of experiencing a stroke.

Strokes are one of the leading causes of death, disability and illness in Canada. A stroke occurs when blood flow to the brain is interrupted, a situation that can result in paralysis, vision or speech problems and, in some cases, death.

High blood pressure – also known as hypertension – affects one in five Canadians. It is the number one risk factor for stroke. High blood pressure is often called a "silent killer" because it has no warning signs or symptoms. You can't see it. You can't feel it. But the good news is that you can control it.

Blood pressure that is consistently more than 140/90 mm Hg is considered high, but if you have diabetes, 130/80 mm Hg is high. Normal blood pressure is below 120/80 mm Hg.

With proper diagnosis and treatment of high blood pressure, you can cut your risk of stroke by up to 40 per cent. High blood pressure often has no symptoms, so have yours checked by a healthcare professional at least once every two years or more often as your doctor suggests.

Alberta Health Services is the provincial health authority responsible for planning and delivering health supports and services for more than 3.7 million adults and children living in Alberta. Its mission is to provide a patient-focused, quality health system that is accessible and sustainable for all Albertans.

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