

# Courtney-Jamaal Rouse

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Major: Nursing

University: Austin Peay State University

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Joanne Banks-Wallace

Mentor Department: Nursing

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## **Stroke risk factors and awareness study**

Courtney-Jamaal Rouse and Joanne Banks-Wallace

Cerebrovascular Accidents, also known as strokes, are the third leading cause of death in the United States. It is estimated that more than 275,000 people die from strokes every year (American Heart Association 2003). In 2002, it was calculated that over 5,400,000 people suffered from a stroke. 2,400,000 of those were males, and 3,000,000 of those who suffered from a stroke were females (American Heart Association 2003). The highest prevalence of strokes occurs within the African American Population. In 2002, around 8% of the total African American population suffered from a stroke, which averages out to be a total of about 111,000 people (American Heart Association 2003). Hispanics are close behind with around 6.4% of their population suffering from strokes in 2002. Strokes occur when the blood supply to the brain is limited or completely cut off. It causes the brain not to be able to function properly and can even cause paralysis on one or both sides of the body. Strokes involve a long recovery process if there is any recovery at all. It seems as though most people do not know and understand how great the risk factors are for strokes. Although the risks for strokes are high, they could be minimized if people take the time and become educated on what are actually those risk factors. People are also unaware of how much it costs our country to provide the health care and aide for stroke victims/survivors. It is estimated that over \$393 billion dollars were spent in 2003. People do not seem to think strokes affect as many people as they actually do. The purpose of this research is to see how much peers in the LSMOAMP program actually know about signs and symptoms as well as risk factors for strokes. A twenty question survey was developed. Questions were derived from a review of the literature. The participants completed the survey. The survey served a dual purpose. It provided information regarding current awareness about strokes among participants in LSMOAMP. It was also a tool to enhance awareness about strokes. If the participants began to think about the questions that they did not know, then that would allow them to delve deeper into the knowledge that they should acquire about stroke risk factors.