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Olympic sprinter Michael Johnson lends support to save stroke research

Legendary athlete Michael Johnson is calling for people to support the Stroke Association and help save stroke research, so that stroke survivors can live their best life possible.

The four-time Olympic sprint champion had a stroke at just 50 years old. In peak physical health, a stroke was the last thing on Michael's mind as he completed his daily work out. Michael recalls experiencing unusual physical sensations – involuntary movement of his left foot, numbness, and a tingling sensation in his left arm. A CT scan and MRI confirmed he'd had a stroke.

He said: “I’d been able to get off my bed and on to the MRI table myself, but when the MRI ended 30 minutes later, I could no longer walk. I couldn’t stand or put any weight on my left leg. The numbness in my left arm had increased significantly and I couldn’t feel the two smallest fingers of my left hand. My foot was completely numb.”

Michael went from being the fastest man in the world, to needing to learn how to walk again. He began by working on his strength, power and fine motor skills on his left side. He knew from his sporting success that the best progress often comes in small, incremental steps.

He credits advancements in research, coupled with his own focus and determination, as key to his recovery: “Research drives improvement in stroke treatment and care, so more people like me can rebuild their lives. Without research I wouldn’t have been able to make anywhere near the recovery I have.”



[Watch video on YouTube here](#)

Stroke is a sudden brain attack and strikes every five minutes in the UK. As a result of the pandemic, the Stroke Association has had to halve its budget for research into stroke, meaning important research that can transform stroke treatment and care is at risk.

Dr Rubina Ahmed, Research Director at the Stroke Association, said: “Stroke is a leading cause of adult disability in the UK and the second biggest killer in the world. The pandemic has shattered our fundraised income and is

threatening research that drives life-changing breakthroughs in stroke care.

“Research improves treatment and care for people affected by stroke so they can live their best lives possible, and that’s why stroke research is worth saving. Now more than ever, we need the public’s support. If you can, please help us find a way through the research funding crisis by donating today, so that we can fund more life-saving research.”

Over the past 30 years the Stroke Association has played a crucial role in supporting stroke research in the UK, and has been at the centre of breakthroughs into life-saving treatments such as thrombectomy, and research which led to the use of the FAST test. Research helps stroke survivors rebuild their lives by driving improvements in treatment and care, but the pandemic has hit research hard. By saving stroke research, more stroke survivors can live life to the full.

Find out how stroke research helps rebuild lives at stroke.org.uk/rebuildinglives or to donate, please visit: stroke.org.uk/saveresearch.

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- Stroke strikes every five minutes in the UK and it changes lives in an instant.
 - The Stroke Association is a charity working across the UK to support people to rebuild their lives after stroke. We believe that everyone deserves to live the best life they can after stroke. From local support services and groups, to online information and support, anyone affected by stroke can visit stroke.org.uk or call our dedicated Stroke Helpline on 0303 3033 100 to find out about support available locally.
 - Our specialist support, research and campaigning are only possible with the courage and determination of the stroke community and the generosity of our supporters. With more donations and support, we can help rebuild even more lives.
 - You can follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

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