Good news for women who like to start the day with a cup of coffee; scientists say it may significantly reduce your chances of having a stroke.

In a study published in the Journal of the American Heart Association (JAMA), Swedish researchers found that women who drank more than a cup of coffee a day cut their risk of stroke by 22 to 25 per cent.

Stroke is a major cause of early death in the UK, along with heart disease and cancer.

The researchers looked at data from more than 54,000 women aged between 49 to 83 whose health had been tracked for around 10 years. After taking into account other risk factors, such as smoking status, body mass index, history of diabetes, high blood pressure and alcohol, coffee consumption was linked to a statistically significant reduced risk of different types of stroke.

The benefit of drinking coffee was the same whether the women drank one to two or several cups of coffee each day. The researchers said people should not change their coffee-drinking habits, but the study should ease the concerns of women.

"Some women have avoided consuming coffee because they have thought it is unhealthy," said study leader Dr Susanna Larson from the Karolinska Institute.

"In fact, increasing evidence indicates that moderate coffee consumption may decrease the risk of some diseases such as diabetes, liver cancer and possibly stroke."

She also said that drinking coffee may cut the risk of stroke by reducing inflammation and oxidative stress and improving insulin sensitivity.

Dr Sharlin Ahmed, research liaison officer at The Stroke Association, said; "We have known for some time that antioxidants found in certain foods and drink, including coffee, could help to reduce a person's stroke risk. This research provides further support to this theory.

"However, it's important to note that caffeine intake can also contribute to high blood pressure, the single biggest risk factor for stroke. We therefore recommend moderate to low-level consumption of coffee as part of a healthy balanced diet combined with regular exercise to help reduce your overall stroke risk."

Device lets patients rest from dental drill

Noise-cancelling technology could soon be available in dental practices. Clinicians from the Kings College in London in the UK said to have invented a device that blocks out the shrill sound generated by air turbines in modern dental handpieces, a main cause for anxiety among patients.