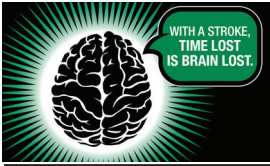




Wish You Well



Stroke Awareness Month

May
2013

A stroke is a brain attack that cuts off vital blood flow and oxygen to the brain. A stroke is an emergency. In the United States alone, stroke is the fourth leading cause of death, killing more than 133,000 a year. There are an estimated 7,000,000 stroke survivors in the U.S. over age 20. Approximately 795,000 strokes will occur this year, with one occurring every 40 seconds and taking a life approximately every 4 minutes. A stroke can happen to anyone of any age, gender or race. Each year, 55,000 more women than men have a stroke and African-Americans have almost twice the risk of a first-ever stroke compared to Caucasians. During a stroke, two million brain cells die every minute and this increases the risk of permanent brain damage, disability or death. Act FAST and get medical attention to the stroke patient as soon as possible. Up to 40 percent of all people who have had a transient ischemic attack (TIA) will go on to experience a stroke later in life. Women alone are twice as likely to die from stroke than breast cancer annually.

There are certain lifestyle changes that you can make to reduce your risk of a stroke. Stop smoking, exercise regularly, watch what and how much you eat and limit alcohol consumption. Some simple stroke prevention guidelines to follow can also cut your risk of being a victim of a stroke. These are risk factors you **CAN** control:

1. **Know your blood pressure.** High blood pressure is a major stroke risk factor if left untreated. Have your blood pressure checked yearly by your doctor.
2. **Identify atrial fibrillation (Afib).** Afib is an abnormal heartbeat that can increase stroke risk by 500 percent. Afib can cause blood to pool in the heart and may form a clot and cause a stroke.
3. **Stop smoking.** Smoking doubles your risk of stroke by damaging blood vessel walls, speeding up artery clogging and raising blood pressure to make the heart work harder.
4. **Control alcohol use.** Most doctors recommend not drinking or drinking only in moderation, no more than two drinks each day.
5. **Know your cholesterol levels.** High cholesterol levels can clog arteries and cause a stroke.
6. **Control diabetes.** Having diabetes means you have health problems that are also stroke risk factors. Your doctor can help with a nutrition program or medicine to control your diabetes.
7. **Manage exercise and diet.** Excess weight strains the circulatory system and increases your risk for a stroke.
8. **Treat circulation problems.** Fatty deposits can block arteries carrying blood to the brain and lead to a stroke.
9. **Act FAST at the first warning signs of a stroke.** Seek immediate medical attention if you experience any stroke symptoms.

Source: <http://www.stroke.org/site/PageServer?pagename=factsheets>



Did you know...Twin County Regional Hospital was awarded Advanced Certification as a Primary Stroke Center by The Joint Commission.

Uncontrollable Risk Factors

Although we all wish we lived in a perfect world where we could control everything that happened to us and our bodies, we don't. There are several risk factors for stroke that you **CANNOT** control.

1. **Age.** Strokes can happen to anyone but risk factors increase with age. Stroke risk doubles for anyone over the age of 55.
2. **Gender.** Strokes occur more often as we get older and since women tend to live longer than men, women do suffer more strokes than men each year.
3. **Race.** African Americans have twice the risk of stroke compared to Caucasians. Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islanders also have a higher risk than Caucasians.
4. **Family History.** If you have a family member that has had a stroke, everyone in the family has a higher risk of having one as well.
5. **Previous Stroke or transient ischemic attack (TIA).** Rehab and recovery are usually the main focus after a stroke. However, preventing a recurrent stroke is also a critical consideration. About 5 to 14 percent of those who have had a stroke this year, will have a second one. A TIA is a serious warning sign of an impending stroke and up to 40 percent of those who have had a TIA are expected to have a stroke later in life.
6. **Fibromuscular dysplasia (FMD).** FMD is a medical disorder where some of the arteries that carry blood throughout the body do not develop as they should. This results in a decrease in the blood flow.
7. **Hole in the heart; patent foramen ovale (PFO).** Strokes and TIA's occur without any obvious risk factors because they are caused by a "hole" in the heart. About 1 in 5 American's have a PFO but do not know it until a medical condition such as a stroke or TIA occurs. Many PFO-related strokes are called cryptogenic, meaning they have no apparent cause.

<http://www.stroke.org/site/PageServer?pagename=uncont>

Use FAST to remember warning signs of stroke:



FACE: Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop?



ARMS: Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

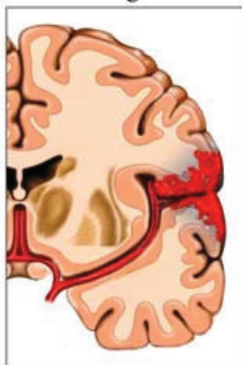


SPEECH: Ask the person to repeat a simple phrase. Is their speech slurred or strange?



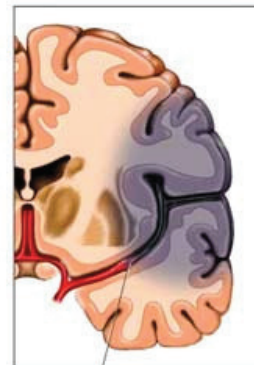
TIME: If you observe any of these signs, **call 9-1-1 immediately.**

Hemorrhagic Stroke



Hemorrhage/blood leaks into brain tissue

Ischemic Stroke



Clot stops blood supply to an area of the brain

May is
Stroke
Awareness
Month.

Pledge to
reduce
your risk.



The Faith Community Nursing program began in October of 2008 as an outreach of Twin County Regional Hospital. The Faith Community Nursing program is just one way we fulfill our mission to promote, preserve and restore the health of our community.

For more information on the Faith Community Nursing program, please call (276) 236-5433.

For more information on Twin County Regional Healthcare or its services,
please visit www.tcrh.org or call (276) 236-1654.

