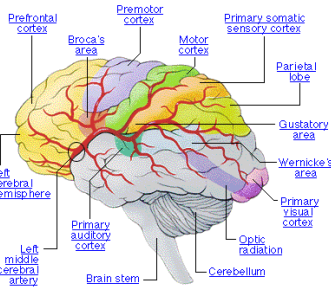




EMPLOYEE HEALTH INITIATIVE: MAY IS STROKE AWARENESS MONTH



May is National Stroke Awareness month. Stroke is a **brain attack**, cutting off vital blood flow and oxygen to the brain. Two million brain cells die every minute during stroke, increasing risk of permanent brain damage, disability or death. **Recognizing symptoms and acting fast to get medical attention can save a life and limit disabilities.** There are two types of stroke: **Ischemic stroke** occurs when arteries are blocked by blood clots or by the gradual buildup of plaque and other fatty deposits. Almost 85 percent of all strokes are ischemic. **Hemorrhagic stroke** occurs when a blood vessel in the brain breaks leaking blood into the brain. Hemorrhagic strokes account for about fifteen percent of all strokes, yet are responsible for more than thirty percent of all stroke deaths.

STROKE FACTS AND STATS

1. In the U.S., Stroke is the third leading cause of death, killing 160,000 people each year, and the leading cause of adult disability. Up to 80% of strokes are preventable.
2. Approximately 780,000 strokes will occur this year; however 500,000 of those strokes can be prevented.
3. Stroke can happen to anyone at any time, regardless of race, sex or age.
4. Stroke death rates are substantially higher for African Americans. In 2003 rates per 100,000 population were 80 for black men, 70 for black women, 52 for white men, and 51 for white women, 45 for Asians/Pacific Islanders, 41 for Hispanics, and 35 for American Indians/Alaska Natives.
5. In the United States, the highest death rates from stroke are located primarily along the southeastern coastal plains, inland through the southern regions of South Carolina, Georgia and Alabama, and along the lower Mississippi River Valley.
6. Atrial fibrillation, high blood pressure, diabetes mellitus, smoking, or physical inactivity can increase the risk of stroke.
7. Nearly 1/3 of men can't recognize one stroke symptom so they can act FAST and help the women in their lives survive stroke.
8. Most people don't know that stroke kills twice as many women as breast cancer every year. Nearly 20% of women report they do not know any risk factors for stroke.
9. More women than men die from strokes, yet 30% of women cannot recognize a stroke symptom.
10. It is estimated that 59% to 75% of caregivers are women. The average caregiver is a married, 46 years old working woman earning \$36,000 per year.

RECOGNIZING SYMPTOMS - SAVE A LIFE BY ACTING F.A.S.T.

Few Americans know the symptoms of stroke. Learning them - and acting FAST when they occur - could save your life or the life of a loved one.



The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke notes these major signs of stroke:

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg – especially on one side of the body
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause

This simple test will help you detect stroke symptoms and Act F.A.S.T.:

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| F = FACE | Ask the person to smile. Does side of the face droop? |
| A = ARM | Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward? |
| S = SPEECH | Ask the person to repeat a simple phrase. Does the speech sound slurred or strange? |
| T = TIME | If you observe any of these signs, it's time to call 9-1-1. |

REDUCING STROKE RISK

Everyone has some stroke risk. A few stroke risk factors are beyond your control, such as being over age 55, being a male, being an African-American, having diabetes, and having a family history of stroke. If you have one of these risk factors, it is even more important that you learn about the lifestyle and medical changes you can make to prevent a stroke. The risk of death and disability can be reduced if stroke victims receive prompt appropriate treatment. **The good news is that 80% of strokes are preventable.**

- Medical stroke risk factors include:** Previous stroke, previous episode of transient ischemic attack (TIA) or mini stroke, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, heart disease, atrial fibrillation and carotid artery disease. These medical risk factors can be controlled. Talk with your doctor about what will work best for you.



- Lifestyle stroke risk factors include:** Smoking, being overweight and drinking too much alcohol. You can control these lifestyle risk factors by quitting smoking, exercising regularly, watching what and how much you eat and limiting alcohol consumption.

STROKE PREVENTION GUIDELINES



1. **Know your blood pressure.** If it is elevated, work with your doctor to keep it under control. High blood pressure is a leading cause of stroke. Have your blood pressure checked at least once each year – more often if you have a history of high blood pressure.
2. **Find out if you have atrial fibrillation (AF).** If you have AF, work with your doctor to manage it. Atrial fibrillation can cause blood to collect in the chambers of your heart. This blood can form clots and cause a stroke. Your doctor can detect AF by carefully checking your pulse.
3. **If you smoke, stop.** Smoking doubles the risk for stroke. If you stop smoking today, your risk for stroke will begin to decrease.
4. **If you drink alcohol, do so in moderation.** Having one drink each day may lower your risk for stroke (provided that there is no other medical reason you should avoid alcohol). Remember that alcohol is a drug - it can interact with other drugs you are taking, and alcohol is harmful if taken in large doses. If you don't drink, don't start.
5. **Know your cholesterol number.** If it is high, work with your doctor to control it. Lowering your cholesterol may reduce your risk for stroke. High cholesterol can also indirectly increase stroke risk by putting you at greater risk of heart disease - an important stroke risk factor. Often times, high cholesterol can be controlled with diet and exercise; some individuals may require medication.
6. **Control your diabetes.** If you are diabetic, follow your doctor's recommendations carefully. Having diabetes puts you at an increased risk for stroke. Your doctor can prescribe a nutrition program, lifestyle changes and medicine that can help control your diabetes.
7. **Include exercise in the activities you enjoy in your daily routine.** A brisk walk, swim or other exercise activity for as little as 30 minutes a day can improve your health in many ways, and may reduce your risk for stroke.
8. **Enjoy a lower sodium (salt), lower fat diet.** By cutting down on sodium and fat in your diet, you may be able to lower your blood pressure and, most importantly, lower your risk for stroke.
9. **Ask your doctor if you have circulation problems.** If so, work with your doctor to control them. Fatty deposits can block the arteries which carry blood from your heart to your brain. Sickle cell disease, severe anemia, or other diseases can cause stroke if left untreated.
10. **If you have any stroke symptoms, seek immediate medical attention.**

AFRICAN AMERICANS AND STROKE

One half of all African American women will die from stroke or heart disease.

African Americans are twice as likely to die from stroke as Caucasians. The rate of first strokes in African Americans is almost double that of Caucasians. The statistics are staggering -- African Americans are affected by stroke more often than any other group. Why? Not all of the reasons are clear why African Americans have an increased risk of stroke.



Some factors include a higher rate of:

- High blood pressure. High blood pressure is the number one risk factor for stroke, and 1 in 3 African Americans suffer from high blood pressure.
- Diabetes. People with diabetes have a higher stroke risk.
- Sickle cell anemia. If sickle-shaped cells block a blood vessel to the brain, a stroke can result.
- Obesity and smoking, two other factors that can increase the risk for stroke.

If you have one or more of these risk factors, it's even more important that you learn about the lifestyle and medical changes you can make to prevent a stroke. The National Stroke Association's stroke prevention guidelines will help you learn how you may be able to lower your stroke risk.

WOMEN AND STROKE

Twice as many women die of stroke than breast cancer every year.

- Despite this startling statistic, women are more worried about their risk of getting breast cancer than their stroke risk. What's more, women think stroke is a men's disease. But the truth is more women than men will die from stroke.
- These are some of the reasons why National Stroke Association developed Women in Your Life, a program to teach both men and women about stroke prevention and the importance of recognizing stroke symptoms in each other.
- To order a free Women in Your Life booklet, call 1-800-STROKES or [click here for an electronic PDF copy](#).



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE
OFFICE OF HEALTH SERVICES

KIDS AND STROKE

Children have strokes too! The incidence of stroke in children is relatively low -- about three cases in every 100,000 children per year. Strokes are slightly more common in children under the age of two. Find out more information about [kids and stroke](#).

STARS - STEPS AGAINST RECURRENT STROKE



As a stroke survivor or a caregiver for a stroke survivor, did you know that having a stroke puts you at greater risk for another stroke? **STARS** stands for Steps Against Recurrent Stroke and is a program to make sure you know there is so much you can do to reduce your risk for a recurrent stroke.

Learn More About STARS. Click on this link: <http://www.stroke.org/site/PageServer?pagename=STARS>

STROKE RAPID RESPONSE – EXPEDITING STROKE CARE

Stroke Rapid Response™ ~ Expediting Stroke Care

Stroke is an emergency! Stroke is treatable! Stroke patients can have positive outcomes with *FAST* recognition of symptoms in the field and appropriate medical intervention. National Stroke Association's **Stroke Rapid Response™ (SRR)** is a new innovative program that teaches prehospital providers practical stroke information and provides reference tools that can be used when caring for stroke patients.

*Test Your Stroke Knowledge and
Receive 2 CEU Contact Hours Today!*



Click on this link for more information about [Stroke Rapid Response™ ~ Expediting Stroke Care](#).

CAREGIVERS AND STROKE



Nothing can prepare stroke survivors and their families for the sudden, often catastrophic, nature of stroke. If you are the family caregiver for someone who has had a stroke it may be difficult for you to manage alone. The very

nature of stroke causes a variety of impairments which can affect daily life, causing physical and emotional adjustments for most people. Finding a way to manage these new roles and demands can help balance the rewards and stress of care giving. It is important to ask for help so you do not put your own health and well being at risk. The National Stroke Association has partnered with [Lotsa Helping Hands](#) to give family, friends, neighbors, colleagues and others an easy and immediate way to help as the stroke survivor and family adjust to the demands of stroke recovery.

[Visit Lotsa Helping Hands Now](#)

CLICK ON LINKS BELOW FOR MORE RESOURCES

For the sources for this article and more information about stroke warning signs, risk factors, prevention, treatment, and new research, please visit the following Web sites of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and its partners.

- **CDC's Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention** - <http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/>;
- **American Heart Association** - <http://www.americanheart.org>
- **American Stroke Association** - <http://www.strokeassociation.org>;
- **National Stroke Association** - <http://www.stroke.org>;
- **Brain Attack Coalition** - <http://www.stroke-site.org>;
- **Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services** - <http://www.cms.hhs.gov>;
- **National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke** - <http://www.ninds.nih.gov>.