

May 2009

American Stroke Month

May is recognized as American Stroke Month. Strokes are the third leading cause of death in adults in the United States. It is also the number one cause of disability in adults.

Many consider strokes to be “brain attacks.” Just like with the heart, the brain depends on oxygen and nutrients which are carried in the bloodstream. During a stroke, blood flow to the brain is compromised. A blood vessel either bursts in the brain or a blood clot forms in a blood vessel in the brain. When this occurs, parts of the brain do not receive enough oxygen and begin to die.

There are many *modifiable risk factors* for strokes including:

- High Blood Pressure
- Tobacco Dependence
- High Cholesterol
- Diabetes Mellitus
- Obesity
- Carotid Artery Disease
- Abnormal Heart Rhythms

Talk to your physician about how you can decrease your risks for a stroke.

Common warning signs of a stroke include:

- **Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arms, or legs**
- **Sudden change in vision (one or both eyes)**
- **Sudden change in speech (difficulty talking)**
- **Sudden onset of confusion**
- **Sudden change in facial appearance (inability to smile or difficulty swallowing)**
- **Sudden onset of a headache, loss of coordination, or dizziness**

If you or someone with you experiences any of these symptoms, call 911 and seek medical help immediately.

Contact Us

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