



The Brain Buzz

A UAMS NEWSLETTER FOR STROKE SURVIVORS
AND THEIR CAREGIVERS

Need Some Support?

Each week, stroke survivor Molly Schwarz visits patients at UAMS on H8 that have had a stroke. If you are interested in having her visit with you to share her experience and provide support, please let your nurse know.



Signs and Symptoms of Stroke

Written by:

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A family member suddenly develops facial drooping, one sided arm and/or leg weakness and slurred speech. Most of us can recognize these as symptoms of a stroke and know to call 911. We are taught this by watching TV, reading educational posters or our personal experiences with family or friends who have had a stroke. What you may not know is there are many other signs that a person may be having a stroke and should go to the Emergency Department.



Some stroke patients can have difficulty speaking, even without their words being slurred. They may speak clearly, but suddenly are unable to find the right words to use while talking. They may lose the ability to talk or write all together. This can be very frustrating for the patient because many times they know what they want to say, they just can't say it. Sometimes they can talk normally, but they may lose the ability to understand what you are saying to them. This person needs to be evaluated for a stroke.

Numbness can also be a symptom of a stroke. Usually this goes along with weakness, but there are some strokes that only have numbness. A sudden onset of numbness on one side of the body should be evaluated by a doctor.

As we get older, we may have some slow changes to the way we think or remember. Some mild confusion or memory loss may be normal. Sudden onset of new confusion or memory loss without a known cause should raise concern for a stroke and needs to be evaluated by a physician.

A sudden development of new dizziness (spinning sensation), clumsiness, or unsteadiness could indicate a possible stroke. Even if the patient seems to have good strength in their arms and legs, the inability to walk normally or hold objects needs to be evaluated.

New, sudden vision changes are also concerning for a stroke. These include double vision (seeing two of everything), loss of parts of your vision (either in the center of vision, on the sides, or complete vision loss) or inability of your eyes to look in all directions.

Signs and Symptoms of Stroke Continued.....

Everyone has a headache from time to time. A sudden severe headache with no known cause, or a new or different type of headache, especially if combined with any of the other symptoms listed above could indicate a possible stroke.

So watch for the major signs of a stroke: facial drooping, one sided arm and/or leg weakness or slurred speech; but remember that a stroke can also be subtle (mild) or look like others illnesses. If you suspect that you see signs of a stroke, call 911 immediately.

Light and Flavorful Fish Tacos

Serves 4 (about 3 tacos each)

For the slaw:

1 small cabbage, shredded (about 4 cups)
1 small carrot, grated
2 to 3 green onions, thinly sliced
1/2 to 1 whole jalapeño chile, seeded and minced, optional
1 clove garlic, minced
1 tablespoon lime juice
2 tablespoons mayonnaise
Sugar, honey, or agave nectar to taste (optional)
Salt and pepper

For the fish:

1/3 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
1/8 to 1/4 teaspoon smoked paprika or chipotle powder
1 to 1 1/2 pounds snapper, sole, tilapia, rockfish, or catfish
2 tablespoons vegetable oil suitable for high-heat cooking (like safflower or grapeseed)

To serve:

12 corn tortillas
Torn cilantro leaves
Sliced avocado
Lime wedges
Salsa

To prepare the slaw, place the shredded cabbage in a bowl and sprinkle with 1/2 teaspoon of salt. Massage and squeeze the cabbage with your hands to help it release its liquid and begin wilting. Transfer the cabbage to a strainer set over a bowl and set aside to drain for about 15 minutes.

Squeeze the cabbage of its excess liquid, one handful at a time, and transfer to a mixing bowl. Add the grated carrot, green onions, and jalapeño (if using). Toss to combine. Whisk together the minced garlic, lime juice, and mayonnaise. Taste and add a sweetener, salt, and pepper to taste. Pour over the cabbage mix and toss to combine. To prepare the fish, combine the flour, salt, pepper, and paprika in a shallow container. Pat the fish dry, then dredge it in the flour mixture.

Heat the oil in a heavy (preferably cast iron) pan over medium-high heat until the oil is shimmering and flows to coat the entire bottom of the pan. Add the fish to the pan — if cooking multiple fillets, arrange them in a single layer with a little space between. Cook for 2 to 3 minutes per side, carefully flipping once with a spatula, until both sides are golden-brown and the fish is opaque and flakes apart easily in the thickest part. Transfer the fish to a clean plate and flake into large chunks. Meanwhile, heat the corn tortillas, one by one, in a heavy, dry pan, until soft and warm. Wrap them in a clean cloth as you go. (Alternatively, wrap them in a clean dish towel and warm them in the microwave for a few seconds.)

Serve the fish on a platter with the tortillas, slaw, cilantro, avocado, lime, and salsa on the side, letting each diner assemble his or her own tacos.

Nutrition: Calories: 230; Fat: 10.1 g; Carbs: 32.1g; Fiber: 4.2g; Sugars: 1.2g; Protein: 4.2g; Chol: 1.9mg; Sodium: 254.2mg





Caregivers: Need Help After Your Loved One Has Had a Stroke?

The website provided by the American Stroke Association can help. This website provides many resources for caregivers to help you to manage the stressful time right after a stroke. Go to www.strokeassociation.org, click on "Life After Stroke" and then on "Family Caregivers." If you aren't able to access the internet, call the American Stroke Association at 1-888-4-STROKE.

"It is so important as a caregiver not to become so enmeshed in the role that you lose yourself. It's neither good for you nor your loved one."

- Dana Reeve

Refreshing the Caregiver

Source: American Stroke Association

One of the most important things you can do for yourself and your loved one is to carve out time and space for yourself. This has to be a conscious action that you take every day. It could be as simple as spending 10 minutes playing a fun computer game. If you don't learn how to take a timeout, your frustration is going to boil over. You'll be less productive and your relationship with your loved one will suffer.

- Find a way to take a 10 or 15 minute walk a couple of times a day, even if it's just around the yard.
- Choose a space in the house that is your "quiet space" where you can go take a few deep breaths, close your eyes, read a book, pray, meditate, listen to music, sing, write in your journal, talk to a friend on the phone or just rest quietly for a few minutes.
- Schedule your timeouts. Choose a time when your loved one is typically sleeping, eating, watching a TV program or seems to be at their best during the day. They will get accustomed to your little timeouts after a while and stop resenting your privacy and interrupting you.

Insist on these moments in a gentle way and reward your loved one when you've refreshed yourself.



**Need More
Information
About Stroke?**

National Stroke Association

1-800-STROKES (787-6537)

www.stroke.org

American Stroke Association

1-888-4-STROKE (478-7653)

www.strokeassociation.org

UAMS Neurology Department

501-686-5838

<http://neurology.uams.edu/>

Face drooping.

Arm weakness.

Speech difficulty.

Time to call 911.

Spot a stroke **F.A.S.T.**



StrokeAssociation.org

