

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.



Molly Schwarz

Changing Your Lifestyle After a Stroke

By Dana M. Smith, MS, MCHES

After a stroke, many people realize that they need to change some lifestyle habits in order to improve their health and prevent another stroke. Here are just a few ideas:

- 1. Improve your eating habits.** Eat moderate amounts of food and cut down on foods like fatty meats, butter and cream which can be high in cholesterol. Bake, broil, roast and boil foods instead of frying them. Start eating more servings of fruits and vegetables. Also try to cut back on saturated fat, trans fat, sugar and salt.
- 2. Stop smoking.** If you are a smoker, it is crucial that you stop to help to reduce your risk of having another stroke. If you would like to quit smoking, please call the **Stamp Out Smoking Quitline** at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669). This is a free service that can provide over the phone counseling and nicotine replacement therapies, if approved by your doctor.
- 3. Maintain a healthy weight.** Talk with your doctor about the best way to take off extra pounds.
- 4. Decrease your stress level.** Try using relaxation exercises, deep breathing, yoga, walking or other activities to reduce your stress level.
- 5. Take all your medicines as prescribed and have regular medical check ups.** Get your blood pressure checked often and let your doctor know if it is running high.
- 6. Start an exercise program after checking with your doctor.** Start off slowly by walking and build up to at least 2.5 hours a week.



Changing your lifestyle can be difficult but it can also be very rewarding. Take your time and start slowly. You can do it!!

Source: American Heart Association, 2013

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Substance Abuse and Strokes

By Archana Hinduja, MD

Treatment of strokes has vastly improved over the years with advances in medicine, telemedicine and great teamwork. The use of intravenous tPA (medicine that helps to breakdown clots) has increased in the treatment of acute ischemic stroke. However, prevention of stroke is always the better option.

There are certain risk factors that individuals can control to reduce their risk of having a stroke including high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol, physical inactivity and obesity. One risk factor for stroke that is often overlooked is that of substance abuse, especially in young adults. Besides stroke it can lead to many other health issues like heart attack, seizures etc.

6 - 12% of strokes that occur in young adults are due to substance abuse. Over the last decade, the number of strokes due to substance abuse has increased, especially in men and the African-American population. The drugs most commonly used which lead to stroke are cocaine, heroin and amphetamines. These drugs can cause ischemic strokes, hemorrhagic strokes and subarachnoid hemorrhages. It has been reported that half of young adults with a stroke were current smokers, and 1 in 5 abused illegal drugs.

This issue needs to be addressed especially since these patients are young and will have an earlier onset of illness and death. Their families are highly devastated since these patients are young. Since these young patients often do not have other risk factors for stroke such as high blood pressure, the risk factor of drug abuse can be changed with treatment. Appropriate help with a timely referral to a drug treatment program and increasing awareness of the risk of stroke with drug use will hopefully decrease the incidence of disability in these young patients.

If you are a patient that struggles with addiction or a family member of one, please talk to your doctor about getting treatment. Treatment for addiction can help to prevent a future stroke!



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.

STROKE is an Emergency.
Every minute counts.
ACT F.A.S.T!

	F ACE	Does one side of the face droop? Ask the person to smile.
	A RM(S)	Is one arm weak or numb? Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?
	S PEECH	Is speech slurred? Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence. Is the sentence repeated correctly?
	T IME	If the person shows any of these symptoms, Call 911 or get to the hospital immediately.

Heart Healthy Holiday Recipe: Cranberry Sauce with Lime and Ginger

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup pure maple syrup
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 1/2 tsp finely shredded lime peel
- 2 Tbs lime juice
- 1 12 oz package fresh or frozen cranberries
- 1 tsp minced fresh ginger

Directions

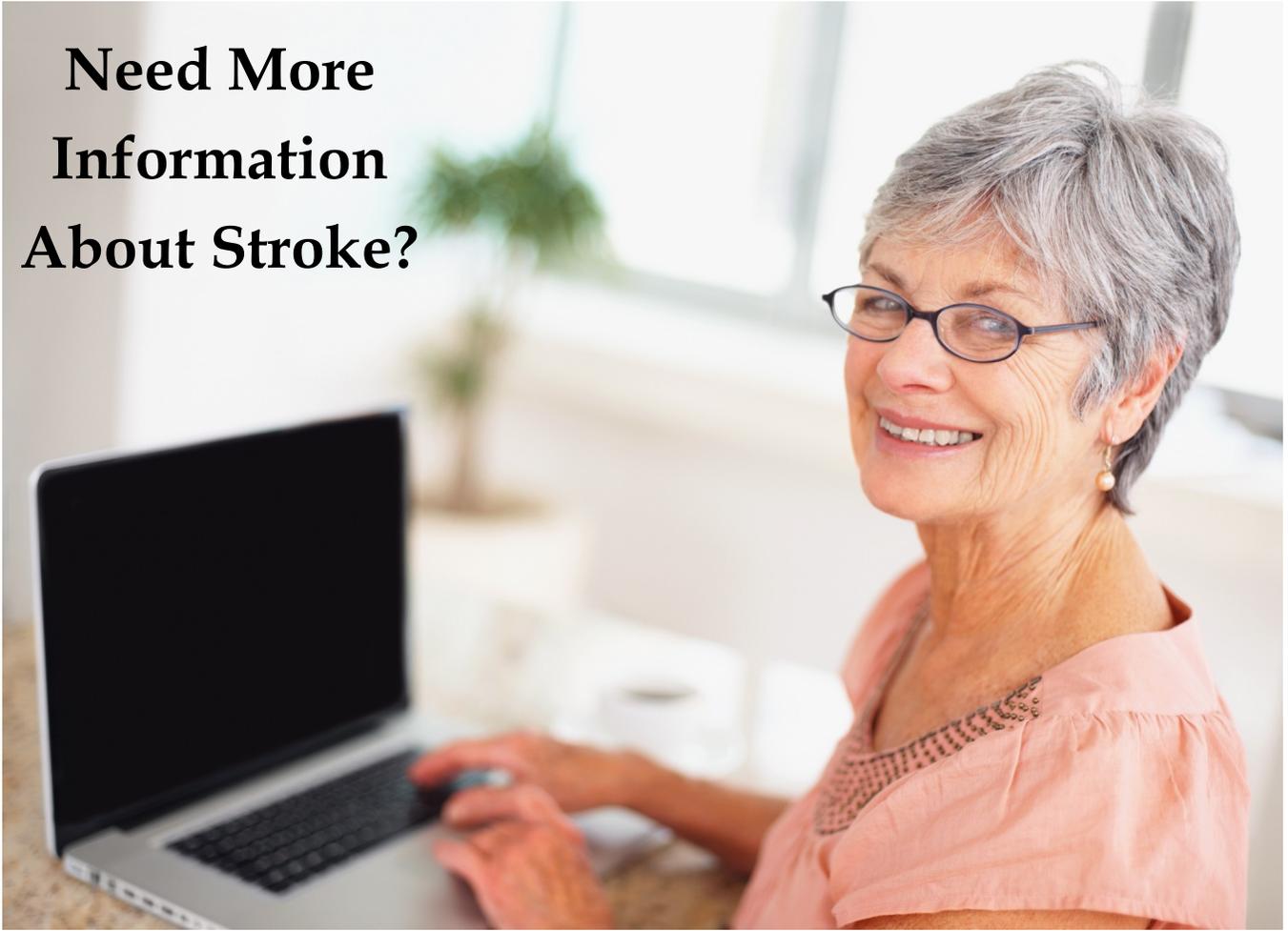
1. In a medium heavy saucepan, stir together sugar, maple syrup, water, lime peel, and lime juice. Bring to boiling; reduce heat. Simmer, uncovered, about 3 minutes or until sugar is dissolved.
2. Stir in cranberries. Simmer, uncovered, for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in ginger. Simmer, uncovered, about 6 minutes more or until berries have popped and mixture starts to thicken, stirring occasionally. Cool.



Nutrition Facts (Cranberry Sauce with Lime and Ginger)

Servings Per Recipe 12, cal. (kcal) 80, carb. (g) 21, fiber (g) 1, vit. C (mg) 5, sodium (mg) 2, calcium (mg) 10, iron (mg) 0, Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet

**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

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