

Heart Disease is the #1 Killer of Women. Know Your Risks.

Newsletter 5
February 2017



No Stroke of Luck

We've all heard the phrase, "stroke of luck," meaning a chance happening, or luck of fortune. But surviving an actual stroke is not a matter of being lucky. It's a matter of time, of minutes. Every minute a stroke victim does not receive medical care, it means their brain is suffering damage. It could result in permanent disability or it could cause death.

Nearly 800,000 Americans suffer a stroke annually and 75% of those are first time strokes. Stroke is the fifth leading cause of death in the U.S. killing 129,000 people a year. In Connecticut, it is the third leading cause of death.

A stroke can be caused either by a clot obstructing the flow of blood to the brain, called an ischemic stroke, or by a blood vessel rupturing and preventing blood flow to the brain called a hemorrhagic stroke. The most common cause of a hemorrhagic stroke is uncontrolled

hypertension, or high blood pressure.

The key to surviving and avoiding disability is getting immediate treatment, preferably at a stroke certified hospital in your area. Six out of 10 Americans don't know where stroke-certified hospitals are in their communities. Stroke Certified hospitals have received recognition for achievement in American Heart Association/American Stroke Association healthcare quality improvement programs. Find one near you [here](#).

Stroke is a medical emergency. Fast action and appropriate treatment can save lives. If given within three hours of the start of symptoms, a clot-busting drug called tissue plasminogen activator (tPA) can reduce long-term disability for the most common type of stroke.

Thanks to research and advanced treatments, there is hope. Unfortunately, most Americans cannot identify even one

[stroke symptom](#). A simple and effective way of remembering the warning signs and symptoms is with the acronym

F.A.S.T.:

F is for Face Drooping: Does one side of the face droop or is it numb? Can the person smile?

A is for Arm Weakness: Is one arm weak or numb? Ask the person to raise both arms.

S is for Speech Difficulty: Is speech slurred? Is the person unable to speak or hard to understand?

T is for Time to call 9-1-1: If someone shows any of these symptoms, even if the symptoms go away, call 9-1-1.

But don't rely on luck. Know the signs of stroke and you could save a life, maybe even your own.

February is American Heart Month!

While American Heart Month is a federally designated month in the United States, it's important to realize that cardiovascular disease knows no borders and does not discriminate. Cardiovascular disease, including heart disease and stroke, remains the leading global cause of death with more than 17.3 million deaths each year.

It is also important to [know that your risks](#) for heart disease can increase based on your ethnicity or family history. In fact, African-Americans are at greater risk for heart disease, stroke and other cardiovascular diseases.

But there is good news! Eighty percent of cardiovascular disease can be [prevented](#) through everyday healthy living steps, including not smoking; physical activity; good nutrition; maintaining healthy weight; and controlling blood pressure, cholesterol and blood glucose levels.

Know your risks and begin to take your steps to start on a new path to good heart health!

Spotlight in the Community

On January 22nd, Bethel AME Church in Bridgeport and St. Vincent's Medical Center held their "Let's Get Physical" health lesson. The lesson covered why at least 150 minutes of moderate activity or, 75 minutes of vigorous activity (or a combination of both) each week, can change your life.

In addition, the organizations partnered with AKA Sorority who provided a personal trainer who led a brief movement exercise and answered questions about physical activity.

For information on the 2017 Go Red For Women Luncheon go to <http://hartfordgoredluncheon.heart.org>

Visit CTGoesRed.com for more Information on Women's Heart Health

