



C E N T R A

CONGREGATIONAL HEALTH MINISTRY

Stroke Awareness Month

Toolkit
May, 2008

Please consider using the attached materials for education and information for members of your faith community. Stroke is still a leading cause of death, as well as a potentially debilitating life event. We can help each other by identifying the factors that we can control in preventing stroke. We can also learn the signs of stroke and help individuals learn the importance of immediate care.

The materials are intended to be used in a newsletter, bulletin, and/or handout format. Information may be obtained from the following web sites:

<http://www.stroke.org/site/PageServer?pagename=STROKE>

<http://www.stroke.org/site/DocServer/scorecardQ.pdf?docID=601>

<http://www.stroke.org/site/PageServer?pagename=CONT>

<http://www.stroke.org/site/PageServer?pagename=UNCONT>

<http://www.giveme5forstroke.org/patients/>

<http://www.strokecenter.org/patients/stats.htm>

If you would like materials to create a display for a bulletin board, you may access a power point on the Congregational Health web site at:

<http://clergy.centrahealth.com/WebPages/conghlth.aspx>

The power point may be printed out, and pieces cut and pasted to suit a display on a bulletin board or other area.

This is another important health issue where we can be more informed and more responsive. It is an issue that impacts someone in every faith community. We can demonstrate the stewardship of the gift of life by sharing information, and practicing what we know.

From <http://www.giveme5forstroke.org/patients/>

Give Me 5!

To check if someone is having a stroke, ask the person to give you five:



WALK IS THEIR BALANCE OFF?

Things to look for or ask:

- Are they able to stand straight and tall? Or do they slump to one side?
- Do they appear to have lost strength on one side of their body?
- Are they leaning to one side when they try to walk?
- Are they veering off to one side?
- Are they dragging the foot on the side they are leaning toward? Can they tell you whether they can feel the side that they are leaning toward?



TALK IS THEIR SPEECH SLURRED OR FACE DROOPY?

Things to look for or ask:

- Are they having problems speaking?
- Are they having problems "getting their words out?"
- Do they sound like they have something in their mouth when they speak?

- Are they saying the appropriate words (do their words make sense) when they speak?
- Does one side of their mouth droop down?



REACH IS ONE SIDE WEAK OR NUMB?

Things to look for or ask:

- Ask the person to raise both their arms up together. Does one arm begin to fall down?
- Ask the person to squeeze your fingers with each hand; is one hand weaker than the other?
- If you ask the person to try to hold something like a pen, can they do it without any difficulty?
- Can the person feel you touch them on their arm? Lightly touch them on the skin of both arms, and ask them if the feeling is the same on each.



SEE IS THEIR VISION ALL OR PARTLY LOST?

Things to look for or ask:

- Ask the person about their vision. Do they normally wear glasses or contact lenses, or do they normally not use either of these? Ask the person to try to describe any changes in their vision.
- Is their vision clear?
- Is it blurry?
- Can they see everything in their field of vision? Does the person see everything or just part of the visual field?
- Does the person see double?



FEEL IS THEIR HEADACHE SEVERE?

Things to look for or ask?

- Do they have a headache? On a scale of 1-10, 10 being the worst, ask them to rate their headache.
- Do they normally have headaches? If so, is this headache any different from their usual headache?
- Does this feel like the worst headache of their life?
- Does light bother or hurt their eyes?
- Does a sound or loud noise make the headache worse?

What is a Stroke?

A stroke occurs when a blood vessel that carries oxygen and nutrients to the brain is either blocked by a clot or bursts. When that happens, part of the brain cannot get the blood (and oxygen) it needs, so it starts to die. Stroke is the third-leading cause of death in the United States and a leading cause of disability. However, research shows the public remains unaware of stroke's warning signs and the need for immediate medical attention, even if the symptoms subside. Call 9-1-1!

Don't wait. Call 9-1-1!

If you see even just one of these symptoms, even if it goes away, do not wait, call 9-1-1 immediately, this person may be having a stroke.