

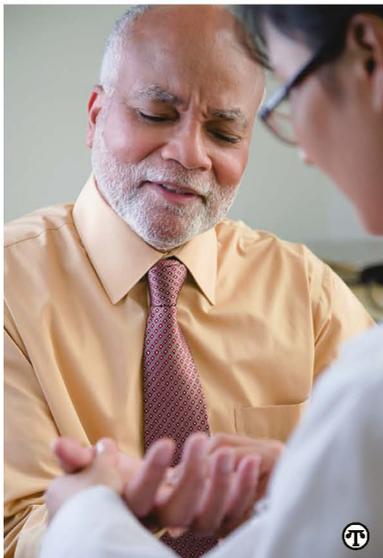
New Survey Reveals Impact Of Spasticity On Stroke Survivors And Their Caregivers

(NAPSA)—The American Heart Association estimates that there are nearly seven million stroke survivors in the United States. Sixty percent (n=504) of stroke survivors live with a debilitating condition known as spasticity.

National Stroke Association and Allergan, Inc. recently conducted a survey to understand the true impact of this condition on stroke survivors and their caregivers. According to the findings, 70 percent (n=300) of stroke survivors living with spasticity and their caregivers rank spasticity as one of the top three symptoms impacting their life post-stroke, ranking second only to paralysis. Yet, close to 50 percent of stroke survivors and their caregivers are unaware of the available treatment options.

Spasticity is a debilitating condition in which the muscles contract and spasm, causing stiffness and pain. Many stroke survivors who live with the condition may have upper limb spasticity, which affects the elbow, wrist and fingers, presenting as a bent wrist with fingers pointing downward, a fist that stays clenched or a flexed elbow that stays twisted against the chest.

“Spasticity is a disabling condition, but, oftentimes, patients are either uncomfortable or too over-



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whelmed to discuss it with their physician. The focus after someone has experienced a stroke is so commonly on preventing a second stroke that rehabilitation goals are covered in broad terms. This can leave patients and their caregivers feeling unprepared for a larger discussion about the post-stroke symptoms they may be experiencing, including spasticity.

It's critical that patients and caregivers understand that even if a person has been experiencing spasticity for years, in many cases, there are ways to help manage the condition,” said Dr. Elliot J. Roth, Medical Director of the Patient Recovery Unit and Attending Physician, Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago; Professor & Chairman, PM&R, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine.

Spasticity can occur weeks, months or even years after a stroke, possibly after a patient has stopped seeing a physician for follow-up care. Spasticity continues to be underrecognized and inadequately managed.

Although 95 percent (n=780) of physicians surveyed believe spasticity has a moderate to severe impact on their patients' lives, approximately 31 percent of neurologists and 27 percent of primary care physicians who treat stroke survivors focus their efforts on preventing a secondary stroke versus discussing physical complications like spasticity.

For more information about spasticity, including an interactive discussion guide to help patients and caregivers facilitate a conversation with their healthcare professional, please visit www.SpasticityAfterStroke.com.