



spotlight on health

Will You Know What To Do When Stroke Strikes?

(NAPSA)—What's true for humor and romance is also true when it comes to dealing with stroke—timing is everything.

A stroke occurs when a blood vessel that supplies blood to the brain either becomes blocked or bursts. When part of the brain is deprived of blood, it is also deprived of oxygen. When that part of the brain lacks oxygen, it dies. Until the stroke can be stopped, a stroke victim loses brain tissue minute by minute which, according to experts, causes severe disability or even death.

That's why it's critical to be able to recognize the warning signs of stroke and to call 9-1-1 if you think you or someone you know is experiencing a stroke.

There are five key warning signs of stroke:

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body,
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding,
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes,
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination, and
- Sudden, severe headache with no known cause.

Around 70 percent of all strokes occur among people over the age of 65. A person's chance of having a stroke doubles each successive decade after age 55 up to age 84. Yet, more than 50 percent of the general population cannot



Regular exercise can help to significantly reduce the risk of stroke.

name the most commonly known warning signs of stroke. Among major risk factors for stroke are high blood pressure, tobacco use, diabetes, high cholesterol, and physical inactivity.

While there is little we can do about heredity, there are steps you can take that will reduce the risk of stroke.

- If you still smoke cigarettes, stop,
- Adopt a diet that is lower in saturated fat and cholesterol, and
- Exercise. Research indicates that people who burn 2,000 calories each week with exercise have nearly a 50 percent lower risk of stroke than those who do little or no exercise. A brisk daily walk can be a great way to get started.

To learn more, visit the Web site at www.StrokeAssociation.org or call toll free 1-888-4-STROKE.