



REGENCY PARK SENIOR LIVING

WELLNESS REPORT | VOLUME 1 | APRIL 2019

Be Prepared to Take FAST Action If You Suspect a Stroke

By Len Canter
HealthDay Reporter

Would you be able to recognize if you or someone close to you were having a stroke? A stroke is a 911 medical emergency and every second counts for survival. To help you recognize the signs of stroke, the National Stroke Association wants you to remember **F-A-S-T**, or fast.

F stands for "face." Signs of stroke include drooping or numbness on just one side of the face. An uneven smile is another clue that something's wrong.

A stands for "arm." Is just one arm weak or numb? If the person tries to lift both arms, does one drift downward? In general, stroke signs appear on just one side of the body.

S stands for "speech." When a stroke happens, the person can't speak or their speech is slurred or hard to understand. He or she won't be able to accurately repeat a simple sentence.

T stands for "time." It's time to call 911 if you see any of these symptoms. Even if the symptoms go away, the person needs to get to the hospital fast. There's a finite window of opportunity for care, particu-



larly the administration of a specialized clot-busting medication, needed when the stroke is due to a blood clot.

More Signs of Stroke

Sudden numbness or weakness in one leg.

Trouble understanding, seeing or walking.

Dizziness or lack of balance.

A sudden severe headache with no known cause.

It's good to know the name of the stroke center nearest to you. Leading hospitals and medical centers with comprehensive stroke services often carry the designation "Certificate of Distinction" from the Joint Commission, an accreditation organization. You can access a stroke center database at quality-check.org.

To protect yourself and loved ones, learn all you can about stroke now, so you'll be prepared should an emergency strike.

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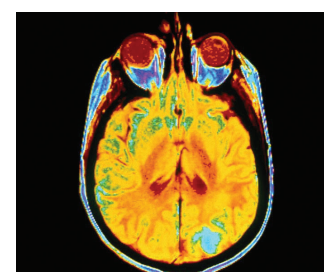


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PLUS

MEDICAL MILESTONES IN HISTORY



MEDICAL MILESTONES IN HISTORY



1943

The first dialysis machine is invented by Dutch physician, Willem Kolff



1967

The first heart transplant is performed by South African Dr. Christiaan Barnard



1996

Dolly the sheep is the first mammal cloned from human adult cells

Attention, Seniors: Drink More Water and Head Off Disease

By Robert Preidt
HealthDay Reporter

Not drinking enough water is a common but under-recognized problem among American seniors that puts their health at risk, researchers say.

"So many health issues are related to inadequate hydration," including urinary tract and respiratory infections, frequent falls and other problems, said study author Janet Mentes. She's a professor of nursing at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).

One problem in determining seniors' In this study, the researchers investigated whether a method called salivary osmolality could be used to check hydration levels in older adults.

Salivary osmolality compares the ratio of water to certain chemicals that occur naturally in saliva. It can be measured using a simple, noninvasive device called an osmometer.

The study of 53 people, aged 65 or older, in Los Angeles found that, overall, seniors had higher osmolality (that is, greater dehydration) than younger adults. Seniors' dehydration was higher in the morning than the afternoon, and it was a bigger problem for those with limited mobility, the findings showed.

Interviews with participants pointed to a major reason for higher osmolality in the morning: Many avoid drinking water so they won't have to urinate during the night.

The study was recently published online in the journal SAGE Open Nursing.

"Many seniors are underhydrated for a period of time, and when they are exposed to a virus or bacteria they are more likely to develop an infection, such as urinary tract infections, pneumonia or other respiratory diseases," Mentes said in a UCLA news release.

"And they will be treated for the infection, but the underlying underhydration will not be recognized," she added. "Thus, an opportunity to educate the individual about adequate fluid intake is missed."

Up to 40 percent of older people who live in the community may be chronically underhydrated, the researchers said.

Dehydration accounted for a 5 percent increase in preventable emergency department visits between 2008 and 2012, and adults older than 65 have the highest hospital admission rates for dehydration, according to the U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.



Docs Back Away From Low-Dose Aspirin for Heart Attack Prevention

By E.J. Mundell
HealthDay Reporter

Millions of aging Americans worried about heart attacks and strokes have for years popped a low-dose aspirin each day, thinking the blood thinner might lower their risk.

But new guidelines issued Sunday by two cardiology groups say that, for most adults, the practice may no longer be warranted. The new heart health guidelines were issued jointly by the American College of Cardiology (ACC) and the American Heart Association (AHA). The two groups agree that for older adults at low risk -- no history of heart attack, stroke or cardiac surgeries -- the risk of bleeding that comes with daily low-dose aspirin is now thought to outweigh any heart benefit.

"Clinicians should be very selective in prescribing aspirin for people without known cardiovascular disease," Dr. Roger Blumenthal, co-chair of the 2019 ACC/AHA Guideline on the Primary Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease, said in a statement.

"It's much more important to optimize lifestyle habits and control blood pressure and cholesterol as opposed to recommending aspirin," said Blumenthal. He's a professor of cardiology at Johns Hopkins Medicine in Baltimore.

The bottom line, according to Blumenthal: "Aspirin should be limited to people at the highest risk of cardiovascular disease and a very low risk of bleeding."

Why the change?

The AHA and ACC say that the most up-to-date research shows that even at a low dose (typically 81 milligrams), the odds for dangerous bleeding that comes with daily aspirin use now outweighs any benefit.

Dr. Kevin Campbell is a cardiologist working in North Carolina. Speaking with CNN, he said that advances in



cardiovascular care may have also rendered daily aspirin an obsolete treatment for the average person.

"For the most part, we are now much better at treating risk factors such as hypertension, diabetes and especially high cholesterol," explained Campbell, who wasn't involved in drawing up the new guidelines.

"This makes the biggest difference," he said, "probably negating any previously perceived aspirin benefit in primary prevention."

The AHA and ACC stressed that daily aspirin does have an important role to play for people at high risk -- those with a prior history of heart attack, stroke or cardiac procedures such as stenting or open heart surgery.

In those cases, daily use of the blood-thinning pill "can be lifesaving," the groups said.

People who find they have trouble lowering their high cholesterol or controlling their blood sugar might also be considered for daily low-dose aspirin, as long as their risk for bleeding doesn't outweigh any potential benefit, the guidelines say.

But for people at low to average risk of heart disease, a healthy lifestyle is by far the best path to living a long, healthy life.

"The most important way to prevent cardiovascular disease, whether it's a

build-up of plaque in the arteries, heart attack, stroke, heart failure or issues with how the heart contracts and pumps blood to the rest of the body, is by adopting heart healthy habits and to do so over one's lifetime," Blumenthal said.

That includes staying away from smoking, secondhand smoke and vaping, the two heart groups said.

It also means sticking to heart-healthy diets that focus on fruits, vegetables, nuts, whole grains and fish. Intake of salt, saturated fats, fried foods, processed meats and sugary beverages should all be kept to a minimum.

Exercise is also of great benefit to the heart: At least 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity exercise (brisk walking, swimming, dancing or biking, for example) is recommended.

According to the new guidelines, all of the steps listed above can help you stick to another recommended goal: maintaining a healthy weight.

And what about cholesterol? Healthy living helps keep arteries clear, the AHA and ACC said, but if more help is needed, statins might have to be taken.

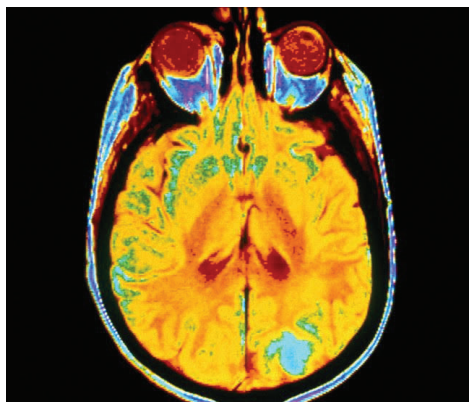
"Statins should be commonly recommended with lifestyle changes to prevent cardiovascular disease among people with elevated low density lipoprotein [LDL] cholesterol levels at or above 190 mg/dl," the two groups explained in the statement.

Statins may also be indicated for people with "type 2 diabetes and anyone who is deemed to have a high likelihood of having a stroke or heart attack upon reviewing their medical history and risk factors," the AHA and ACC said.

The new guidelines were presented on Sunday at the ACC's annual meeting in New Orleans.

Brain Scans Spot, Track Alzheimer's

By Robert Preidt
HealthDay Reporter



Brain scans can improve diagnosis and management of Alzheimer's disease, a new study claims.

Researchers assessed the use of PET scans to identify Alzheimer's-related amyloid plaques in the brain. The study included more than 11,000 Medicare beneficiaries with mild thinking impairment or dementia of uncertain cause.

This scanning technique changed the diagnosis of the cause of mental impairment in more than one-third of the participants in the study.

The brain scan results also changed management -- including the use of medications and counseling -- in nearly two-thirds of cases, according to the study published April 2 in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

"These results present highly credible, large-scale evidence that amyloid PET imaging can be a powerful tool to improve the accuracy of Alzheimer's diagnosis and lead to better medical management, especially in difficult-to-diagnose cases," said study co-author Maria Carrillo, chief science officer of the Alzheimer's Association.

"It is important that amyloid PET imaging be more broadly accessible to those who need it," she added in an

association news release.

Funding for the study came from Avid Radiopharmaceuticals Inc., General Electric Healthcare, and Life Molecular Imaging.

"We are impressed by the magnitude of these results, which make it clear that amyloid PET imaging can have a major impact on how we diagnose and care for patients with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of cognitive decline," said lead author Dr. Gil Rabinovici. He's a professor of neurology at the Memory and Aging Center at the University of California, San Francisco.

There is no cure for Alzheimer's disease, but early diagnosis means that patients can receive treatment to manage symptoms and be directed to clinical trials for new drugs.

Early diagnosis also means that patients and families can plan for the future, including safety, care, legal and financial issues, and access resources and support programs, the researchers said.

In this study, the PET scans revealed that about one-third of patients previously diagnosed with Alzheimer's had no significant amyloid buildup, and their Alzheimer's diagnosis was reversed.

But in nearly half of patients not previously diagnosed with Alzheimer's, the PET scans revealed significant amyloid plaque buildup, resulting in a new diagnosis of Alzheimer's.

One-third of the study participants who had previously been referred to Alzheimer's clinical trials showed no sign of amyloid buildup based on PET scans. Based on those results, doctors were able to ensure that nearly all (93

percent) of patients referred to Alzheimer's trials were amyloid-positive, which is critical to these trials' success.

"Accurate diagnoses are critical to ensure patients are receiving the most appropriate treatments. In particular, Alzheimer's medications can worsen cognitive decline in people with other brain diseases," Rabinovici said.

"But perhaps more fundamentally, people who come into the clinic with concerns about memory problems want answers. An early, definitive diagnosis may allow individuals to be part of planning for the next phase of their lives and to make decisions that otherwise would eventually need to be made by others," he said.

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PUBLISHED BY:

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SENIOR LIVING, INC.**

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