

Recognizing and Treating Stroke

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Symptoms of Stroke

- FAST
 - Face, Arm, Speech, Time
- Any acute change in function should be considered a stroke until proven otherwise
- Never wait to see if it will go away!
 - Time is brain
 - You need to act on symptoms to potentially save yourself or a loved one from permanent impairment

Unique symptoms for women

- » Loss of consciousness
- » Generalized weakness
- » Confusion/agitation
- » Shortness of breath
- » Vomiting, hallucinations, pain, seizures, hiccups

Other unique aspects

- » More likely to live alone, spend long time in a care facility and have worse outcomes

Definition

- Loss of blood flow (ischemic)
 - localized clot or a clot from a distant site (embolism)
 - 85%
- Bleeding (hemorrhagic)
 - ruptured blood vessel
 - 15%

Examination

- » Physical and Neurologic exam
- » We are gathering findings that help us to determine what has occurred and where
- » NIHSS-a scale to estimate severity and guide our treatment

Testing

- » CT scan to look at brain and blood vessels
- » MRI
- » Labs
- » EKG
- » Chest x-ray

Treatment

- » Acute treatment
- » Long-term treatment

Acute Treatment

- » Tissue plasminogen activator (t-PA)
- » Aspirin
- » Endovascular procedures



Long-term Treatment

- » Blood thinner options
 - » Aspirin
 - » Plavix
 - » Coumadin
 - » Heparin-like products



Other Treatments and Risk Factor Modification

- » Cholesterol
- » Blood pressure
- » Hormones and oral contraceptives
- » Blood Sugar
- » Diet



More risk factors

- » Migraine
- » Heart disease
- » Age
- » Pregnancy



Oral contraceptives

- » The pill was introduced in 1960
- » Prior age limit was 35 (smokers) and 40 (nonsmokers)
- » 1989 no limit up to menopause in healthy nonsmokers
- » use low dose (less than 50mcg) estrogen
- » Progestin only no increase stroke risk

OC Stroke Risk

- » 11 per 100,000
- » Treating 24,000 women leads to one additional stroke per year
- » Similar risks with patch or ring
- » Must weigh risk in setting of migraine with aura, especially after age 35

Menopausal Hormone Therapy

- » No increase risk of bleeding strokes
- » Mild increase risk of stroke (0.15/100 vs 0.13/100)
- » MHT benefits outweigh risk in women less than 60 y/o or less than 10 yrs from menopause
- » Requires review with gynecologist

Resources

- » American Stroke and Heart Association
- » National Institutes of Health
- » National Stroke Association
- » American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
- » Up To Date
- » womenshealth.gov