

Community Health Coalition, Inc.

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Stroke Awareness and Women's Health Month

Stroke Awareness

A **stroke** happens when the brain does not get enough blood. A stroke occurs when blood flow to the brain is blocked, either by blood clots or narrowed blood vessels, or when there is bleeding in the brain that occurs with uncontrolled high blood pressure. Deprived of nutrients, brain nerve cells begin to die within a few minutes. A stroke can cause sensory and vision loss, problems with talking and walking, or difficulty in thinking clearly. In many cases, the effects of stroke are not reversible.



Cedric M. Bright, MD

Dr. Cedric Bright, MD, Assistant Dean of Admissions, Director of the Office of Special Programs at UNC School of Medicine states, “the best medicine for stroke awareness and prevention is ‘YOU’ taking ownership of your health by watching what you eat and what you weigh; exercising and controlling your blood pressure and cholesterol.”



What are the risks?

Risk of a stroke increases if you:

- Have high blood pressure. • Have high cholesterol.
- Have had a heart attack or stroke.
- Have a family history of heart attack, stroke or heart disease. • Have peripheral artery disease. • Smoke.
- Are overweight or obese. • Have diabetes. • Drink excessively. • Are inactive and don't exercise.

Warning Signs!!

Other Known Facts About Who Has Strokes Include:

- Adults over the age of 40 are most likely to have strokes. Younger adults and kids can also have them.
- About the same number of men and women have strokes.
- People of ALL races are at risk for stroke. African Americans are almost twice as likely to die from a stroke as whites. African Americans often have more damage.
- People with heart disease may have a bigger risk of stroke. Certain kinds of heart disease can cause blood clots.
- A person who has been diagnosed with Peripheral Artery Disease (P.A.D., also known as poor circulation in the legs), has more than double the risk of a heart attack or stroke.

Women's Health

Reducing Inflammation -The Key to Healthy Aging

Many of us are struggling with chronic illness. Many others will be diagnosed with medical conditions in the future. **Medical problems such as diabetes, hypertension, heart disease and cancer are all too prevalent in our community, especially in African American women.** Why is that? Inflammation is the basis of chronic medical conditions as we age. Inflammation results from chronic exposure to some type of insult. Insults, or stressors may come from a poor diet and extreme emotional stress.

Diet is extremely important and food can be used as medicine. A diet that is high in carbohydrates or too much fatty meat and lacking good quality protein, fruits and vegetables will cause inflammation. Excess body fat is a source of inflammation. It causes the release of chemicals that are part of the body's immune system.

Poor sleep is an insult that can interfere with the body's ability to repair, regenerate and recharge. Not often thought of as a toxin, lack of sleep is a detriment to good health. Chronic stress is also a toxin that can affect your immune system. The hormone **cortisol** is known as our stress hormone. Prolonged exposure to emotional (such as relationship stress and financial stress) and physical stress, (such as chronic pain) has negative effects on our overall health.

Dr. Sheila Allison, MD, Gynecologist at Southpoint Medicine and Women's Health Associates says, "many women are so busy taking care of everyone else, that they often neglect the basics of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. **A healthy diet, regular exercise, avoiding stressful situations and stressful people, drinking water and committing to 7 to 8 hours of sleep nightly will pay dividends in healthy aging.**"



Shelia Allison, MD

Remember the ABC's: Remember to Monitor your.....

Activity **B**lood Pressure **C**holesterol

For More Information, Contact:

National Stroke Association at www.stroke.org or 800-787-6537

American Heart Association at www.heart.org or 800-242-8721

Everyday Health at www.everydayhealth.com or 646-728-9500



Please Make a Donation through SECC or PayPal:

Did you know that Community Health Coalition is an approved SECC charity? If you are a state employee or retiree, choose (Code 3770) to send your SECC gift to us! Thank you.



Go to <http://www.chealthc.org/makeadonation.html>
Thank you.

Health Tip is a message from **Community Health Coalition, Inc.** and is written in partnership with **Central Carolina Black Nurses' Council Inc.**, **The Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance of Durham and Vicinity, NC** **Mutual Life Insurance Company** and **Duke Regional Hospital**.

REMEMBER Healthy People 2020: A Clear Vision to Healthy Living!