

Facts about Stroke, PAD, and Aneurysm and Screening for Stroke and Vascular Disease

Did you know these disturbing factors about stroke?

- Strokes are the 3rd largest cause of death in the United States, killing 144,000 people each year and a leading cause of serious, long term adult disability.
- Up to 80% of strokes are preventable -- you can prevent a stroke.
- 795,000 people in the U.S. have a stroke each year, or one every 45 seconds.
- Stroke can happen to anyone at any time, regardless of race, sex or age.
- Approximately 55,000 more women than men have a stroke each year.
- Men's stroke incidence rates are greater than women's at younger ages, but not at older ages.
- Blacks have almost twice the risk of first-ever stroke compared with whites.
- There are currently more than 4 million people in the United States living with the after-effects of stroke.
- Stroke is the leading cause of disability among adults in the U.S.
- Stroke or "brain attack" occurs when a blood clot blocks an artery (a blood vessel that carries body) or a blood vessel (a tube through which the blood moves through the body) breaks, interrupting blood flow to an area of the brain. When either of these things happen, brain cells begin to die and brain damages occurs.
- When brain cells dies during a stroke, abilities controlled by that area of the brain are lost. These abilities include speech, movement and memory. How a stroke patient is affected depends on where the stroke occurs in the brain and how much the brain is damaged.
- Strokes Strikes Fast. Few Americans know the symptoms of stroke. Learning them-and acting FAST when they occur-could save your live or a life of a loved one.

- Common stroke symptoms include:
 - 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.
 - Sudden severe headache with no known cause.

Do you know about the dangers of Peripheral Artery Disease?

- More than 8 million Americans, suffer from peripheral arterial disease (PAD).
- Just as a heart attack is caused by a blocked artery in the heart, PAD is the same kind of blockage, but it occurs in the arm, leg or other part of the body.
- PAD is the leading cause of amputation.
- PAD is the leading indicator for a fatal event such as heart attack or stroke.
- PAD can build over a lifetime, and the symptoms may not become obvious until later in later in life.

Are you at risk for an Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm?

- An aneurysm is an enlarged portion of a weak area of an artery. Over time, blood flow can cause the weak area to bulge like a balloon. An abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) occurs in the abdominal section of the aorta, the main blood vessel that carries blood away from the heart.
- Most people with AAA do not feel any symptoms.
- The same risk factors that contribute to atherosclerosis, such as high blood pressure and smoking, may make the aorta more vulnerable to aneurysms.
- Most abdominal aortic aneurysms are diagnosed during an abdominal imaging test; in fact, most aneurysms are discovered when an imaging test is conducted for an unrelated reason.
- Aneurysms can burst or rupture, causing serious internal bleeding and, if not treated, death.

- More than 15,000 people die of AAA ruptures in the United States each year. Aneurysms can also unleash potentially life-threatening blood clots.

Assess Your Risk for Stroke, Aneurysm or PAD:

- Do you have high blood pressure or take medication for high blood pressure?
- Do you smoke or have a long history of smoking?
- Do you have an irregular heartbeat?
- Do you have high cholesterol or take medication for high cholesterol?
- Do you have an immediate family (parent, sibling, or child) history of stroke or heart disease?
- Do you exercise less than 3 times per week, for 20 to 30 minutes at a time?
- Do you eat a diet high in saturated and/or animal fat?
- Are you over 50 years of age?
- Are you a male?
- Do you have diabetes?
- Are you more than 30 pounds overweight?

Screening for Stroke and Vascular Disease is simple and non-invasive:

- Ultrasound can detect whether you have a build-up of plaque on your carotid artery that may break off and cause a stroke.
- Ultrasound can detect whether you have an aneurysm in your aorta, that would otherwise not be detectable.
- Ultrasound can determine whether you have PAD.
- Screening can help diagnose whether you have vascular disease that needs treatment.