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DELIVERING HOPE!

Newsletter of Stroke Support India

Editor : Sonal Goregaokar

Stroke Support India
Delivering **HOPE**

Web : strokesupport.in

Raising Stroke Awareness and
Supporting Stroke Survivors
and their Families

Why Stroke Support India ?

Because a stroke changes EVERYTHING !

Fact is, no one is ever 'prepared' for a stroke. Nothing prepares the affected or their family for what lies ahead. And everyday brings new challenges. Where even the medical fraternity sometimes does not have clear and ready answers !

Under these situations, our Stroke Support Groups provide much needed social support and ways for connecting , sharing and mutual support. A research study clearly shows :

" High levels of social support were associated with faster and more extensive recovery of functional status after a stroke.

Social support may be an important prognostic factor in recovery from stroke.

Socially isolated patients may be at particular risk for poor outcome."

More at <https://strokesupport.in/join-support-group/>

OUR MISSION: RAISING STROKE AWARENESS AND SUPPORTING STROKE SURVIVORS AND THEIR FAMILIES



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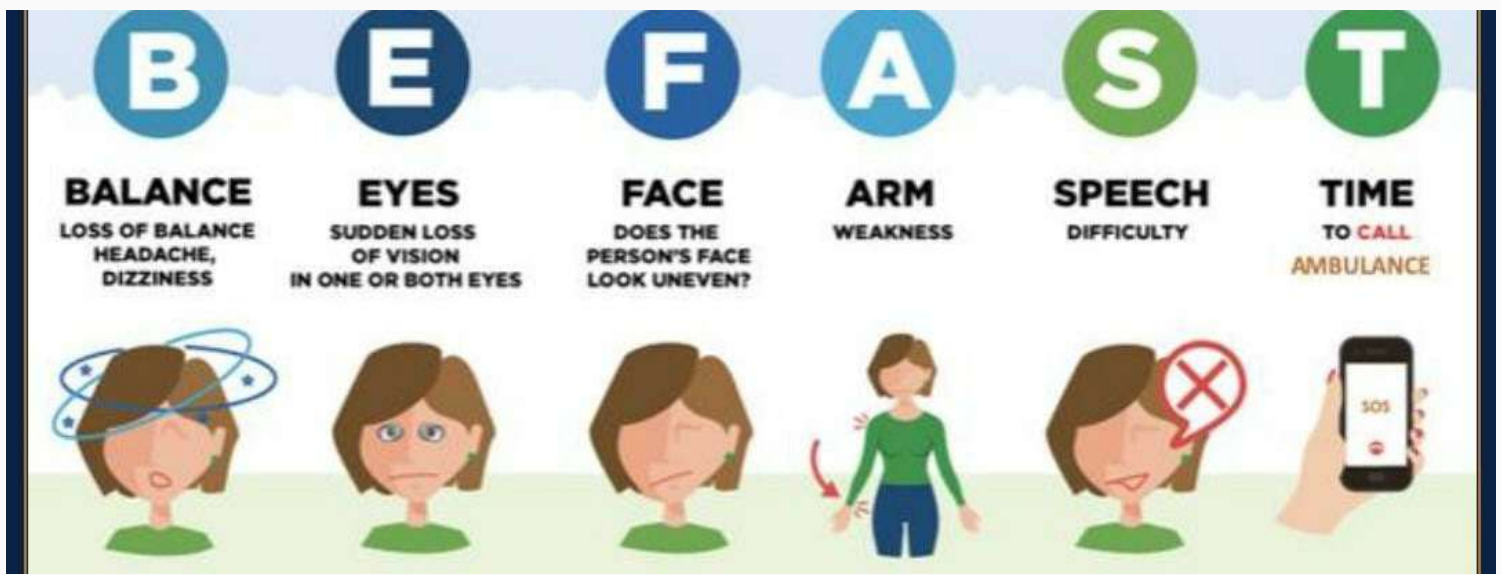
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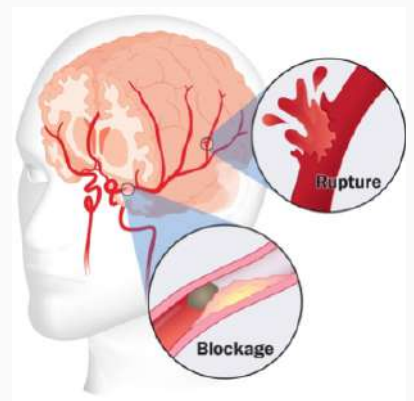
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What is a Brain Stroke? and why is time important ?

Stroke is a condition caused by cutting off of oxygen supply to the brain. It can be caused by a blockage or rupture inside an artery supplying blood to the brain.

When stroke occurs the prime importance is essence of time. The sooner stroke is recognized and the patient reaches an appropriate stroke treatment facility the better it is. A period of upto 3.5 hours is said to be the 'golden hour' in this context since if proper treatment is provided within this period damage to the brain cells is minimal.



Symptoms of Stroke

Prevention is better than cure. And when stroke strikes, Time Lost is Brain Lost - literally ! So , for everyone , awareness of stroke symptoms is very important. The most usual ones are indicated above and usually abbreviated as BE-FAST.

However, there could be other symptoms as well. A severe, unexplained headache for example, or strange smells even ! And if any of these happens, then T for TIME kicks in. That is, take the patient to a nearest hospital (one equipped to handle stroke if possible) as FAST as possible.

Also, it is very important to note that these symptoms may not last – they may quickly vanish – maybe within a few minutes ! But a 'Transient' stroke has probably occurred , and unless proper diagnosis and treatment starts urgently, there is a great risk of a full-blown stroke happening soon ! Hence it is absolutely critical that any of the symptoms not be ignored !

"The typical patient loses about 1.9 million neurons each minute in which stroke is untreated."



My Stroke Journey

BY SONAL GOREGAOKAR



Believe in yourself

I was leading an active life like most people do. I was a fulltime Mom and career working women. I was working for CRISIL for 16 years where I was managing hiring across domestic as well as international arena, cutting across levels. I am still a health freak, love to travel/trek in the mountains and valleys within India. I have an adventurous streak in me; hence I wanted to climb Everest Base Camp (EBC) .

I trained myself for EBC for around two years. Finally, in May 2017, I went to Lukla (Nepal) from where my trek started. Saw the magnificent mountains ranges and I was awestruck by that. I felt so small compared to Himalaya, as if I was speck of dust in entire universe. The trek was smooth, we took few days to a acclimatize our self. We were on the last leg of the EBC trek and I felt extremely euphoric, almost as I have conquered my goal.

But destiny had a different plan for me. On the last leg I suffered from brain stroke and since I got aid only after 22 hours, a large brain damage had happened.

After three days, my family took me back to Mumbai. I was in coma for 8 days, after getting up from coma, I wasn't able to comprehend anything.

The intensity of my brain stroke was high which impacted my speech and I was partially paralyzed.

"If you can't fly, run. If you can't run, walk. If you can't walk, crawl. But whatever you do, you have to keep moving forward"

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

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I realized the ramifications of my brain stroke three months later. I lost my language that is loss of words or grammar and partial body movement were gone. I was unable to express my feelings and unable to move my body effectively. My life changed within a split second. I was a corporate recruiter and from there my life spiraled down to be like a baby in a woman's body. I was able to say two words to my father, "Why Me". And he said to me "you have two choices one is TRY ME or be as you are". I took the choice of "TRY ME". It changed the entire trajectory of my life. I never looked back again.

Of course, I had my family, my friends and my organization supported me, without that I couldn't have achieved so much. They contributed for my recovery in different ways. I did my first ever TED TALK, I completed a course of psychological counselling and I was invited for a podcast. Today I counsel other stroke survivors, especially in area of speech (Aphasia). Having said that my heart still wants to go back to working in the corporate hiring field.

Believe in yourself is the key thing I have learnt from my stroke. And make an absolute resolve that no matter what happens, your growth is inevitable.

Ending with my mentor's quote "Adversity gives birth to greatness. The greater the challenges and difficulties we face, the greater opportunity we have to grow and develop as people".

**It does not
matter
how slow
you go , as
long as you
don't stop**

Like fingerprints, no two strokes are exactly alike. Do not compare yourself to others. Just be the best you can be !



Covid and After - Lessons Learnt

Covid has impacted every aspect of life. And in case of stroke there are several lessons to be learnt. Essentially, three aspects come to the forefront :

- 1) Risk of a stroke affected getting Covid
- 2) Risk of stroke to the Covid affected, and
- 3) Rehabilitation efforts in times of Covid

1) Risk of a stroke affected getting Covid

Stroke survivors usually have a greater risk of catching any infection. Hence stroke patients need to be extra vigilant and observe all precautions such as sanitizing of stuff being brought into the home, masking up wherever necessary, and isolating as much as possible to minimize the risk. Besides, of course, getting vaccinated at the earliest.

2) Risk of stroke to a Covid affected

Increasingly, studies are establishing that a Covid affected has a greater risk of getting cardio-vascular diseases such as heart attacks and strokes. One of the reasons is that Covid infections raise the clotting tendency of blood, which in turn raises risk of brain strokes due to clotting in arteries supplying blood to the brain. So any Covid affected and their family needs to be aware of stroke and its symptoms.

3) Rehabilitation efforts in times of Covid

These efforts have been seriously affected. In a survey we did, almost 55 % of the respondents said they were not getting any services after onset of Covid from qualified Physiotherapists and Speech Language Therapists !

While Tele Rehab efforts have started, they have a long way to go. However, it is clear that the trend is here to stay , at least in cases possible.

People with heart disease or stroke – or for that matter, risk factors for heart disease and stroke – are at much greater risk from the virus than they are from the vaccine.



Some Happenings...

Over the last few months several activities were undertaken by members of Stroke Support India. A very small list includes :

Zoom meetups on :

- Chat with stroke warrior Sameer Bhide
- Emergency Preparedness for Stroke Patients at Home
- Evidence Informed Decision making in Stroke care
- Aphasia- Strategies to enhance communication
- PHEEZEE- Telerehab Systems
- Mini Strokes and TIAs

Podcasts on :

- Stroke Journey of Stroke Warrior Sonal Goregaokar
- Stroke Symptoms in English
- Stroke symptoms explained in Punjabi

On the ground meets

- With chemists and doctors in J&K, West Bengal, Rajasthan and Punjab

and some Plans !

Similar and other activities are planned going forward. Some are already underway. And most hearteningly, all are done by voluntary help and participation of the members of Stroke Support India.

Join our Support Groups to be informed of other events and participate/help where you can !

A river cuts through rocks - not because of its Power but due its Persistence.

PERSIST !

Please forward this Newsletter to any it may benefit. Thank you !

All feedback, suggestions and help welcome.

E-mail to : strokeindia@gmail.com