

February is American Heart Month

This is a time when everyone can focus on their heart health.

The Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention is highlighting a light on hypertension (high blood pressure) which is a leading risk factor for heart disease and stroke. They are committed to addressing barriers to health equity in communities disproportionately affected by cardiovascular disease.

The CDC has provided resources and tools to help take control of high blood pressure which is the leading cause of strokes.

As we prepare for the next month, take time to grab control and utilize the tool kits.

https://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/american_heart_month_patients.htm



What does a stroke feel like?

Strokes can carry a number of sudden, telltale symptoms. These include:

- A droop on one side of the face
- Difficulty lifting one arm to its full height or using one hand
- Difficulty moving a leg, or dragging a leg while trying to walk
- Slurred speech or difficulty with talking
- Impaired vision in one or both eyes
- Vertigo or dizziness
- Difficulty walking or sudden imbalance

Three Things to Do When Someone Is Having a Stroke

1. Call 911 immediately
 - If you do nothing else, act quickly to call 911.
2. Note the time you first see symptoms
 - A clot-busting medication called tPA, or tissue plasminogen activator, can be given to someone if they're having a stroke, potentially reversing or stopping symptoms from developing. But it has to be given within 4.5 hours of the start of symptoms.
3. Perform CPR, if necessary
 - Most stroke patients don't require CPR. But if they are unconscious, check their pulse and breathing. If you find none, call 911 and start CPR while waiting for the ambulance to arrive.

Three Things Not to Do When Someone Is Having a Stroke

1. Do not let that person go to sleep or talk you out of calling 911.
2. Do not give them medication, food, or drinks
3. Do not drive yourself to the emergency room

Stay Focused and Take Action Quickly

As frightening as it can be to witness someone having a stroke, taking a few key steps — and avoiding others — can potentially help your loved one have the best possible outcome.

Are your responders trained to provide care?

What if the symptoms vanish?

Stroke symptoms that vanish in less than an hour still require emergency medical assessments to prevent a full-blown stroke, according to a new science report from the American Heart Association.

Suspected "warning strokes" – called transient ischemic attacks, or TIA's, occur when blood flow to the brain is temporarily blocked. At least 240,000 people in the U.S. have TIAs each year, though the number could be higher since symptoms can quickly disappear and not everyone gets evaluated. A TIA does not cause permanent damage. However, up to 18% of people who experience a TIA will have a larger stroke within three months – and half of those strokes will occur within two days. (according to the American Heart Association publication)

TIA symptoms are the same as stroke symptoms, but they happen suddenly and fade quickly, typically in under an hour.



The Safe Workforce Development team members are American Heart Association instructors and can provide the basis tools when responding to initial emergencies.

