



THE STROKE AID SOCIETY

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NEWSLETTER: MAY – JUNE 2013

NEWS FROM STROKE AID

As mentioned in our previous Newsletter, **MAY was STROKE AWARENESS MONTH** and as planned, the following goals were successfully completed:

1. Kim Lewitte gave a presentation on Stroke Aid at the “Disability and Wellness Event”, which was held at Paterson Park, on the 3rd May 2013.
2. Sandra Colombick, Kim Lewitte and Louise Nell debuted on Chai FM, on the 6th May 2013. They were “naturals” on the air and they discussed what we do at Stroke Aid with flare.
3. Daphne Mnyandu and Albert Mogale (Soweto Group) represented Stroke Aid at the Occupational Therapy Exhibition Day (Chris Hani Baragwaneth Hospital) on the 15th May 2013.
4. We hosted a Workshop at Paterson Park Recreation Centre on the 23rd May 2013. Anupa Singh (Occupational Therapist) gave a very enlightening and informative lecture on the latest updates in the treatment of Stroke. The Workshop was attended by 12 Professionals (Occupational Therapists, a Physiotherapist and a Speech Therapist) and some money was raised to go towards our ever increasing running costs.

THANK YOU to all the fantastic women and the gentleman who helped us achieve our goals.



WHAT'S NEW IN THE TREATMENT/PREVENTION OF STROKE

Following on from our previous article on the **BENEFITS OF TOMATOES**, which was published in our Stroke Aid Newsletter -November/December 2012:

Tomatoes and Stroke Protection

Submitted by Freyda Abrams



Here's another reason to savour tomatoes: A recent study published in the Journal of Neurology, found that tomatoes may help lower your risk of ischemic stroke.

According to Dr. Edward Giovannucci, a Professor of Nutrition and Epidemiology at the Harvard School of Public Health, "We don't understand it entirely yet, but the lycopene in tomatoes may have specific properties that protect the cells in a way other antioxidants may not."

Lycopene is a powerful antioxidant that gives tomatoes their brilliant red colour. Past research has shown that lycopene may help lower the risk of cancer.

In this particular study, researchers found that men with the greatest amounts of lycopene in their blood had a 55 percent lower chance of having a stroke and a 59 percent reduction in strokes due to blood clots.

Researchers suggest that lycopene may be the key to reducing strokes, as it:

- Attacks free radicals.
- Reduces inflammation and cholesterol.
- Improves immune function.
- Prevents blood from clotting

Dr. Giovannucci however cautions, that "we have to figure out which beneficial results are due to lycopene and which are due to other healthy lifestyle habits."

So how much lycopene does it take to protect against stroke? Dr. Giovannucci recommends at least 10,000 micrograms of lycopene per day. That sounds staggering, but plenty of lycopene is found in common foods.

Not all foods with lycopene are created equally. Lycopene is better absorbed in the body when it's in a food with some fat, such as tomato sauce. But don't start eating a diet predominantly containing tomatoes. Dr. Giovannucci says. "It's better to eat a variety of healthy foods and aim for the daily lycopene intake".

You may find it tempting to take a lycopene supplement, but Dr. Giovannucci says it's not the same. He explains, "You may be getting the wrong form of lycopene. Also, there are compounds in food that may be part of what makes lycopene so beneficial,"

His advice: Your best bet is sticking to a diet rich in tomato-based foods. It's cost-effective, it's easy, and it's not dangerous if you overdo it.

Source: JewishWorldReview.com



CLOTS 3: Inflatable Leg Sleeves Reduce DVT in Stroke

The outcome of the "CLOT 3" study was announced at the European Stroke Conference in London (UK) on 31 May 2013 and simultaneously published in the Lancet.

The results ascertained that **intermittent pneumatic compression with inflatable sleeves that fit over the legs reduced the occurrence of deep vein thrombosis (DVT) in immobile patients who had recently had a stroke.**

According to Martin Dennis, MD, University of Edinburgh, " DVT (deep vein thrombosis) is a big problem in stroke patients, with the risk being particularly high in the first few weeks after a stroke, when patients are often immobilized ".

Prof Martin reported: "We have shown that treatment with these inflatable sleeves is feasible, safe and an effective means of reducing DVT in immobilized patients in the first few days after a stroke. Our study also suggested that this therapy could reduce mortality. This should be standard of care for immobilized stroke patients."

Prof. Tony Rudd, Chair of the Intercollegiate Stroke Guideline Group at the UK Royal College of Physicians, endorsed this view. He stated in a press release issued by the University of Edinburgh: "This study is a major breakthrough showing how a simple and safe treatment can save lives,"

It is estimated that there are 130,000 new strokes each year in the United Kingdom alone, and approximately 60,000 of these patients are at risk for DVT because they are immobilized.

Prof. Dennis explained that the sleeves are inflated for a few seconds, one leg at a time, to compress the veins in the legs every minute or so. "By causing contraction of the leg muscles, the sleeves mimic the process of walking in immobilized patients. This ensures blood is pushed around the system, rather than pooling in the legs".

He further explained that antithrombotic drugs such as heparin have been shown to reduce DVT, but benefits in this regard have been offset by bleeding risks. "But use of these inflatable sleeves is not associated with an excess of any major adverse effects that might offset the benefits," he added.

For the study, 2876 patients within 3 days of hospital admission for a stroke were randomly assigned to wearing the compression sleeves.

The thigh-length sleeves were worn day and night for up to 30 days or until discharge, death, or mobility (when the patient could walk to the bathroom).

The average duration of use was 12 days.

The benefit was seen in all subgroups investigated and was evident in both ischemic and hemorrhagic stroke patients.

The sleeves are already used in some surgical patients, but this is the first time they have been shown to work in medical patients. "Some stroke centers use them already, but guidelines don't push them for stroke patients. There hasn't been any data in this population. They could also be appropriate for many other patient groups who are bed bound or hospitalized," Prof. Dennis commented.

He said the sleeves were more effective than compression stockings for DVT prevention. "Stockings have been shown to reduce DVT in surgical patients, but we tested them on stroke patients in CLOTS 1 Study and didn't see a reduction in DVT."

[*The Lancet*](#) is a medical journal.

Depression Strongly Linked to Stroke Risk

In an article published online on **16 May 2013** in [*Stroke*](#), a link between depression in middle aged women and stroke was revealed.

The study shows that **middle-aged women with depression are more than twice as likely to have a stroke** as those without depression, suggesting the stroke risk in these women is stronger than previously thought.

Because traditional risk factors, such as diabetes and hypertension, accounted for only some of the association, the study's authors surmise that a biological mechanism may play a role.



The study results underline the importance of identifying depression as a possible preventable risk factor for stroke, said study author Caroline A. Jackson, PhD, Centre for Longitudinal and Life Course Research, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia.

"We're adding to the growing body of evidence which shows there's a strong relationship between mental health and physical health," said Dr. Jackson. "It's important to raise awareness not just among individual patients but also among doctors, to make sure that people can access proper treatment and care."

Other studies have looked at the association of depression and stroke, although most didn't stratify results by age. The Nurses' Health Study found a 30% higher risk for stroke among depressed women, but it included women who were 14 years older than those in the current study.

"Our study wasn't novel in terms of saying that it's possible that there's a relationship between depression and stroke risk; we're saying it's possibly stronger in these younger-aged women."

Depression Prevalence

The study included 10,547 participants (mean age, 52.5 years). The women completed questionnaires in 1998 and every 3 years during the 12-year follow-up.

Although it has been suggested that antidepressants themselves increase stroke risk, possibly via the inhibition of platelet aggregation that increases bleeding risk, the association between depressive symptoms and stroke remained when researchers excluded women taking antidepressants.

Although experts can't pinpoint the exact mechanism through which depression raises stroke risk in middle-aged women, research has linked inflammatory pathways with depression in heart disease, and a similar mechanism may be at play here, said Dr. Jackson.

"One mechanism that has been proposed in terms of cardiovascular disease is that depression has an effect on the vasculature of the body, and could be adversely affecting the blood vessels or the endothelium of the blood vessels."

Invited to comment, Ralph Sacco, MD, Professor and Chair, Neurology, University of Miami, Florida, and spokesperson for the American Heart Association, said the study was important because of its large size, its focus on middle-aged women, and its finding of a very robust effect of depression on stroke risk.

Dr. Sacco agreed that a vascular mechanism may be involved somehow in the link between depression and stroke, and that risk factors may overlap. "The same risk factors that lead to stroke — high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease — may also affect the brain and affect the risk of depression."

[**Stroke** is a medical journal published monthly on behalf of the American Heart Association.](#)

JUST FOR LAUGHS

Submitted by Sandra Colombick

Homographs are words of like spelling but with more than one meaning. A homograph that is also pronounced differently is a heteronym.

You think English is easy?

- 1) The bandage was wound around the wound.
- 2) The farm was used to produce produce.
- 3) The dump was so full that it had to refuse more refuse.
- 4) We must polish the Polish furniture.
- 5) He could lead if he would get the lead out.
- 6) The soldier decided to desert his dessert in the desert.
- 7) Since there is no time like the present, he thought it was time to present the present.
- 8) A bass was painted on the head of the bass drum.
- 9) When shot at, the dove dove into the bushes.
- 10) I did not object to the object.
- 11) The insurance was invalid for the invalid.
- 12) There was a row among the oarsmen about how to row.
- 13) They were too close to the door to close it.
- 14) The buck does funny things when the does are present.
- 15) A seamstress and a sewer fell down into a sewer line.
- 16) To help with planting, the farmer taught his sow to sow.
- 17) The wind was too strong to wind the sail.



18) Upon seeing the tear in the painting I shed a tear.

19) I had to subject the subject to a series of tests.

20) How can I intimate this to my most intimate friend?

Let's face it - **English is a crazy language**. There is no egg in eggplant, nor ham in hamburger; neither apple nor pine in pineapple. English muffins weren't invented in England or French fries in France. Sweetmeats are candies while sweetbreads, which aren't sweet, are meat. We take English for granted. But if we explore its paradoxes, we find that quicksand can work slowly, boxing rings are square and a guinea pig is neither from Guinea nor is it a pig.

And why is it that writers write but fingers don't fing, grocers don't groce and hammers don't ham? If the plural of tooth is teeth, why isn't the plural of booth, beeth? One goose, 2 geese. So one moose, 2 meese? One index, 2 indices? Doesn't it seem crazy that you can make amends but not one amend? If you have a bunch of odds and ends and get rid of all but one of them, what do you call it?

If teachers taught, why didn't preachers praught? If a vegetarian eats vegetables, what does a humanitarian eat? Sometimes I think all the English speakers should be committed to an asylum for the verbally insane. In what language do people recite at a play and play at a recital? Ship by truck and send cargo by ship? Have noses that run and feet that smell?

How can a slim chance and a fat chance be the same, while a wise man and a wise guy are opposites? You have to marvel at the unique lunacy of a language in which your house can burn up as it burns down, in which you fill in a form by filling it out and in which, an alarm goes off by going on.

English was invented by people, not computers, and it reflects the creativity of the human race, which, of course, is not a race at all. That is why, when the stars are out, they are visible, but when the lights are out, they are invisible.

PS. - Why doesn't 'Buick' rhyme with 'quick'?

You lovers of the English language might enjoy this.

There is a two-letter word that perhaps has more meanings than any other two-letter word, and that is **'UP.'**

It's easy to understand UP, meaning toward the sky or at the top of the list, but when we awaken in the morning, why do we wake UP?

At a meeting, why does a topic come UP?
Why do we speak UP and why are the officers UP for election and why is it UP to the secretary to write UP a report?
We call UP our friends.
And we use it to brighten UP a room, polish UP the silver; we warm UP the leftovers and clean UP the kitchen.
We lock UP the house and some guys fix UP the old car.
At other times the little word has real special meaning.
People stir UP trouble, line UP for tickets, work UP an appetite, and think UP excuses.
To be dressed is one thing, but to be dressed UP is special.
A drain must be opened UP because it is blocked UP.
We open UP a store in the morning but we close it UP at night.

We seem to be pretty mixed UP about UP!
To be knowledgeable about the proper uses of UP, look the word UP in the dictionary.
In a desk-sized dictionary, it takes UP almost 1/4th of the page and can add UP to about thirty definitions.
If you are UP to it, you might try building UP a list of the many ways UP is used.
It will take UP a lot of your time, but if you don't give UP, you may wind UP with a hundred or more
When it threatens to rain, we say it is clouding UP.
When the sun comes out we say it is clearing UP.
When it rains, it wets the earth and often messes things UP.
When it doesn't rain for a while, things dry UP.

One could go on and on, but I'll wrap it UP,
for now my time is UP,
so.....it is time to shut UP!
Now it's UP to you what you do with this email.



**Until next time
Cheers for now and keep warm.**

Sharlene