

THE STROKE AID SOCIETY

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NEWSLETTER: NOVEMBER – DECEMBER 2015

UPDATE FROM THE STROKE AID SOCIETY

- @ Our **30th AGM** was held on the 17th November 2015 @ Jabula Recreation Centre.
- @ Our end of the year celebration, for all our members is being hosted @ Jabula Recreation Centre, next week (8th December 2015).
- @ Confirmation that our application for Funding was received by Lotto and we are holding thumbs that they will continue to support us, so that we can keep our doors open.
- @ During STROKE AWARENESS MONTH (October), Stroke Aid was invited to participate in 2 events.
 1. The Occupational Therapy Department at Charlotte Maxeke Hospital invited us to bring our brochures and booklets and to assist members of the public with their questions regarding stroke and risk factors etc.
A huge thank you to Sandra Colombick for representing the Stroke Aid Society.
 2. "Health Talk" (DSTV Channel 404) a SABC Current Affairs show, requested us to participate in a show dedicated to Strokes.
Neville Harvey (Committee Member and Stroke Survivor) and Sandra Colombick were on the show, which took the format of a live studio discussion. Thank you to both of them.

@ REMINDER



Closing date

Stroke Aid will close on Tuesday the **8th December 2015.**

Re-opening date

Stroke Aid will re-open on **12th January 2016.**

LAUNCH OF MYSTROKE , mySOS Emergency App and ER24 Partnership



MYSTROKE

<http://www.mystroke.co.za/>

Overview

It is estimated that about 360 South Africans have a stroke per day, of which about 110 die and about 90 are left with a life changing disability, causing strokes to be the leading natural cause of disability and the fourth most common cause of death. Twice as many people die from strokes than from heart attacks. Despite the need for effective care of stroke, the treatment of strokes in South Africa has lagged behind that is provided in first world countries for several reasons. In order to address this, a wide network of healthcare practitioners has united to make the required changes which will lead to improved stroke care in South Africa.

MyStroke.co.za is a platform to facilitate the co-ordination of activities of healthcare practitioners, stroke survivor support groups and interested parties to enable the significant advances made internationally to improve the outcome of strokes to now be implemented in South Africa. An enormous amount of work still has to be done to make these ideas a reality, but this is more than possible with the co-operation of the many outstanding and committed healthcare professionals in South Africa who are all committed to providing the best healthcare possible to their patients.

The extensive research regarding stroke conducted around the world has shown that the two most effective treatments for stroke are:

- Admission into a stroke unit where protocol driven treatment is provided by a co-ordinated team of health care professionals, that includes but is not limited to, neurologists or physicians, specially trained nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, psychologists and social workers.
- Treating ischaemic strokes (caused by a blood clot in the brain) with a clot dissolving medicine within 3 hours of the start of the stroke symptoms.

Until recently, South Africa has only had 4 well established stroke units clustered in Gauteng and the Western Cape. A project to support the formation of many more stroke units throughout the country that are able to provide stroke care according to the SASS guidelines for healthcare professionals was initiated in 2014. This initiative is supported by South African Stroke Society.

Other partners in the initiative are the South African Neurological Rehabilitation Association, the Neurological Rehabilitation Physiotherapy Group and others that will be named shortly.

Boehringer-Ingelheim has provided the initial financial support and management of the initiative but funding from other organizations will be needed to implement stroke units in the private and public sectors throughout the country.

mySOS Emergency App, myStroke and ER24 in partnership

A huge amount has been accomplished over the last year in terms of improving stroke care in certain hospitals, but the challenge now is to get the patients to the correct hospitals within the treatment window. One initiative to get patients to you as quickly as possible is our partnership with mySOS and ER24 to enable patients with suspected strokes to get the best help available FAST, as **“TIME IS BRAIN”**.



Links to Nik Rabinowitz' video explaining how to recognise a stroke or heart attack via [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#) or www.mystroke.co.za

Stroke units are being established throughout South Africa

The myStroke Initiative, funded by Boehringer- Ingelheim and endorsed by the South African Stroke Society, has successfully supported the establishment of stroke units throughout South Africa. Sixteen of these units have registered on www.myStroke.co.za indicating that they are able to provide specialist stroke care. There are another 50 hospitals that are setting up the required systems and should be ready to admit stroke patients soon.

Our challenge now is to inform the public and to enable them to get to the most appropriate unit ASAP.

How the public can find the nearest stroke unit

Visit “MyStroke” website

www.mystroke.co.za: Specialist stroke units are able to register on the www.mystroke.co.za. Once the hospitals have multidisciplinary teams trained to treat strokes, as well as the required facilities and technology accessible 24/7 they are then listed on the pages accessible to the public.



mySOS SA

mySOS Emergency App is a free mobile application (<https://www.mysos.co.za/download.html>), which gives the user access to the closest, most relevant emergency service providers, based on the user's location, anywhere in South Africa.

The mySOS App features a dedicated “myStroke emergency button”, for direct access to a dedicated national stroke hotline, operated by a specialist medical team at the ER24 National Emergency Call Centre who are responsible for call screening, triage, emergency advice and dispatching of emergency ambulances based on a set of international criteria.

The mySOS myStroke “Find Near Me” button also allows the public to find the closest stroke unit, no matter where they are in South Africa (<https://www.mysos.co.za/help.html>). It also offers the international FAST stroke screening tool, as a self-assessment tool for the public.

mySOS is a free, lifesaving app which “all South Africans should have on their phones”. We suggest you download it as soon as possible.

Emergency Medical Care

ER24 will dispatch either one of their own or a partner ambulance and will ensure that patients are transported and referred to the nearest appropriate medical care facilities at all times.



***** A special THANK YOU to Rob Wright (Committee Member) for posting information about “MyStroke”, on the Stroke Aid Society’s Facebook Page.**

WHAT'S NEW IN THE TREATMENT/PREVENTION OF STROKE



IMPACT OF BILINGUALISM ON COGNITIVE OUTCOME AFTER STROKE

In a new study published online on the 19th November 2015 in *Stroke* (Journal), it was established that people who speak two languages are twice as likely as those who only speak one language, to regain better cognitive function after a stroke.

Dr Suvarna Alladi, a Neurology Professor at Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences in Hyderabad, India, stated that in recent years it has become clear that life experiences modify the way disease expresses itself in the brain. She referred to a study conducted in Toronto, which found that people who could speak two languages, had later onset dementia.

According to Alladi, Using multiple languages challenges the brain, as it can be harder to find a particular word, switching between languages and this challenge promotes neuroplasticity or "cognitive reserve," which prepares the brain to deal with new challenges, like disease.

Researchers reviewed the medical records of 608 patients in the stroke registry at Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences, between 2006 and 2013.

More than half of the stroke patients spoke at least two languages.

*** In Hyderabad, it is common for children to learn three languages in school. Telugu, Urdu, Hindi and English are common languages which are taught.*

After accounting for other lifestyle factors like smoking, high blood pressure, diabetes, age and education, the researchers found that about **40 percent** of those who were bilingual had better cognitive function after a stroke, compared to **20 percent** of those who spoke only one language.

Bilingual people also performed better on tests assessing attention, but there was no difference in the likelihood of experiencing aphasia.

"They develop stroke at the same age but outcomes appear to be better for bilinguals," Alladi said. Using a second or third language regularly, or speaking it fluently even if you do not use it regularly, seems to provide the benefit to the brain.

"The take-home message would be that cognitively stimulating activities are something you can do in midlife to protect yourself."

"One is speaking two languages, but it could also be playing a musical instrument, or other challenging activities. This is heartening because you know that you can do something to protect yourself," Alladi said.

REFERENCES: Reuters Health - <http://www.reuters.com>
Stroke - <http://stroke.ahajournals.org/>



ON A LIGHTER NOTE ...

SOME OLD, SOME NEW.

Submitted by: Sheila Haydock

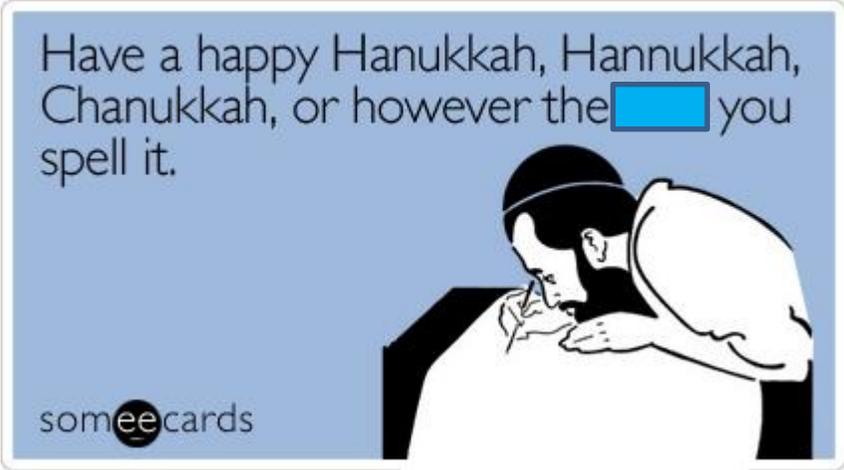
- ~ A man's home is his castle, in a manor of speaking.
- ~ Dijon vu - the same mustard as before.
- ~ Practice safe eating - always use condiments.
- ~ Shotgun wedding - A case of wife or death.
- ~ A hangover is the wrath of grapes.
- ~ Does the name Pavlov ring a bell?
- ~ Condoms should be used on every conceivable occasion.
- ~ Reading while sunbathing makes you well red.
- ~ When two egotists meet, it's an I for an I.
- ~ A bicycle can't stand on its own because it is two tired.
- ~ What's the definition of a will? (It's a dead give away.)
- ~ Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana.
- ~ In democracy your vote counts. In feudalism your count votes.
- ~ She was engaged to a boyfriend with a wooden leg but broke it off.
- ~ A chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion.
- ~ If you don't pay your exorcist, you get repossessed.
- ~ With her marriage, she got a new name and a dress.
- ~ The man who fell into an upholstery machine is fully recovered.
- ~ You feel stuck with your debt if you can't budge it.

- ~ Local Area Network in Australia - the LAN down under.
- ~ Every calendar's days are numbered.
- ~ A boiled egg in the morning is hard to beat.
- ~ He had a photographic memory that was never developed.
- ~ A midget fortune-teller who escapes from prison is a small medium at large.
- ~ Once you've seen one shopping center, you've seen a mall.
- ~ Bakers trade bread recipes on a knead-to-know basis.
- ~ Acupuncture is a jab well done.
- ~ Santa's helpers are subordinate clauses.

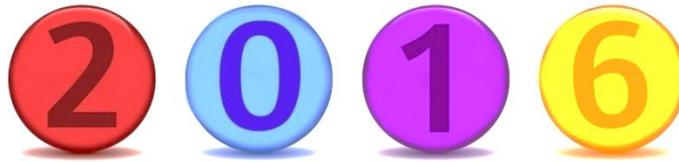
On behalf of the Stroke Aid Team, I would like to wish all our members, their families & caregivers, as well as all our "friends" (of the Stroke Aid Society), a joyous festive season.

May the magic and the wonder of the holiday season stay with you throughout the coming year.





Here's to a year filled with health, happiness, and spectacular success.



HAPPY NEW YEAR

Until next year
Cheers

Sharlene

