WOMEN'S HEALTH

For Women, Strokes Are A Much Greater Concern

(NAPSA)—Each year approximately one in five American women is diagnosed with cardiovascular disease, including stroke and heart attack. It is estimated that more than 370,000 of these women will suffer a stroke, the number three cause of death among Americans.

In fact, women account for more than 60 percent of the 163,000 people who die from a stroke every year. Stroke kills nearly twice as many women annually as breast cancer and AIDS combined.

A stroke, which is sometimes referred to as a "brain attack," results from a sudden interruption of blood flow—often caused by clots—to any part of the brain. This event injures or kills brain tissue and impairs normal function in the parts of the body controlled by the affected brain area. Stroke can lead to severe impairments, including debilitation from paralysis, short-term memory loss and speech and vision problems that may result in the need for long-term care.

Alarmingly, studies show that women suffering a stroke wait longer to go to the emergency room and, once there, wait longer to be seen by an ER physician. Additionally, following a stroke, women often receive less aggressive treatment than men. For these reasons the impact of a stroke can be more devastating for women. Women who have already had a stroke are at increased risk for another stroke or a heart attack especially within the first six to 10 years.

Today, if you've had a recent stroke you can help protect against another stroke or heart attack by working with your doctor to develop an individualized plan that may include lifestyle changes and medications.

"Everyday changes can be made to reduce the risk of another stroke including identifying and treating risk factors like diabetes and high blood pressure; changing lifestyle habits such as quitting smoking, exercising and eating healthy," said Dr. Bhuvaneswari Dandapani, a stroke neurologist at Melbourne Internal Medicine Associates, Melbourne, FL. "Also, medications that help keep blood platelets from sticking together and forming clots, including clopidogrel, also known as PLAVIX, aspirin and warfarin, a therapy that can further reduce risk of clot formation, can be prescribed by your doctor."

To learn more about PLAVIX, please visit www.plavix.com, or call 1-888-547-4079.