

Striking News About Strokes

American Stroke Association Program Helps Seniors Recognize Warning Signs And Risk Factors

(NAPSA)—From stop lights to sirens, ignoring a warning sign can have dire consequences for personal safety.

The same is true when it comes to ignoring warning signs for our health. For example, many seniors—more than any other population—don't know the warning signs for strokes or the risk factors associated with them.

As a result, many don't realize they are having a stroke and often wait too long before they seek medical care.

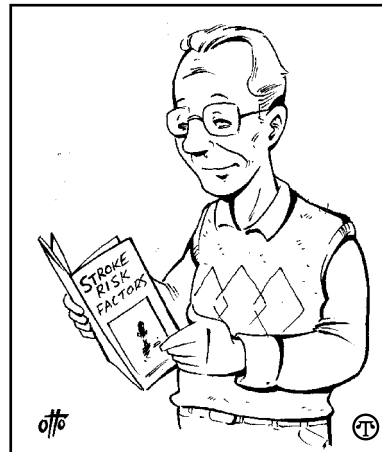
Fortunately, the American Stroke Association has responded to the problem by creating a program that educates seniors about stroke.

The materials—which are distributed to senior centers across the country—explain the warning signs and risk factors associated with stroke through interactive work sheets and a video presentation.

The early results of the program are promising, with 89 percent of the women and 83 percent of the men who participated in the program reporting they can now recognize the warning signs of a stroke.

These stroke warning signs include:

- sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body,
- sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding,
- sudden difficulty seeing in one or both eyes,



- sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination, or
- a sudden severe headache with no known cause.

Part of the significance of this problem stems from the fact that with people over age 55, the incidence of stroke more than doubles with each successive decade.

While 22 percent of men and 25 percent of women who have an initial stroke die within a year, the percentage moves higher among people 65 and older.

Studies also reveal that the rate of symptomless or silent strokes increase with age. These silent strokes do their damage over time, gradually blocking the delivery of oxygen to the brain.

To learn more about stroke warning signs and risk factors, visit the American Stroke Association Web site at www.StrokeAssociation.org.