

Preventing Stroke

Stroke is the third-leading cause of death in the United States behind heart disease and cancer. Many people are unaware that, to a large extent, stroke is both modifiable and preventable.

Are you at high risk for stroke? Aultman offers options to help you learn about stroke and lower your risk.

STROKEAWARE

Take the free, fast and confidential stroke assessment at www.aultmanstrokeaware.com. If you're at high risk, you'll receive a free consultation with an Aultman health professional. For a paper copy of the StrokeAware assessment, call the Aultman Health Line at 330-363-7600 or 800-393-9337.

CAROTID ARTERY SCREENING

Your risk of stroke increases if your carotid arteries, which provide the main blood supply for the brain, have narrowed due to plaque buildup.

Aultman Vascular Services, located on the first floor of the Bedford building, offers a noninvasive screening to see how well blood flows through your carotid arteries. Call 330-363-4229 for more information about the carotid artery screening.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Stop by the main Aultman Hospital lobby Monday, May 16 from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. for Stroke Awareness Day. Get your blood pressure checked and receive educational materials about stroke, risk factors, warning signs and prevention.

Also, join Dr. John Andrefsky for his "Explaining Stroke" Health Talk presentation. The event is Tuesday, May 24 from 1:30-3 p.m. at the Stark County Main Library located at 715 Market Ave. in Canton. Health Talks are free and open to the public. Call 330-363-8255 (TALK) to register.

MODIFIABLE RISK FACTORS FOR STROKE

- High blood pressure
- Smoking
- Diabetes
- Heart disease
- High cholesterol
- Carotid stenosis (abnormal narrowing of carotid artery)
- Diet and nutrition
- Physical inactivity
- Obesity and body fat distribution

AULTMAN OFFERS ADVANCED NEUROSURGICAL SERVICES



■ Dr. Mark Weiner (right) performs neurosurgery on a patient's brain.

Neurosurgery is the specialized surgical field that treats disorders of the brain and spine

From brain tumors to traumatic head injuries to degenerative disease of the spine, Aultman neurosurgeons have the expertise to handle some of the most complex neurosurgical problems. "We've modeled the Aultman Neurosurgery Program after those developed by the most prestigious medical institutions in the country," explained Chairman and Medical Director of Surgery Mark Weiner, M.D., a neurosurgeon who trained at the Mayo Clinic.

Aultman has three neurosurgeons on staff: Philip Immesoete, M.D.; Jean-Claude Tabet, M.D.; and Weiner. All three work exclusively at Aultman Hospital. Their offices are located in the Aultman Physician Office Building, which is connected to the hospital. This allows them to dedicate all their professional energies to caring for Aultman patients.

They treat common neurosurgical conditions such as disc herniations as well as complex conditions like brain and spinal tumors. "Aultman is a referral center for smaller hospitals in our five-county area," Weiner said. "We have the technology and the comprehensive care to treat patients with complex brain and spinal diseases."

“OUR HIGHLY TRAINED PHYSICIANS AND STAFF USE ADVANCED MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY TO PROVIDE STATE-OF-THE-ART, HIGH-QUALITY NEUROSURGICAL CARE IN A COMPASSIONATE MANNER.”

— MARK WEINER, M.D.

Advanced radiology technology enables the neurosurgeons to gain a deeper understanding of a patient's condition. "State-of-the-art MRIs and CTs allow us to make better decisions on whether to operate and what specific procedure to perform," Weiner explained. "Additionally, we bring sophisticated technology into the operating room with tools such as stereotactic intraoperative magnetic field navigation. This allows us to perform brain tumor surgery more safely and effectively."

Specially trained nurses, anesthesiologists and surgical technicians support the neurosurgeons in the operating room. Lori Myers, RN, has been in the neurosurgery operating room for more than two

decades. "It's an exciting and very busy atmosphere. I like the adrenaline rush," she said. "Procedures such as a craniotomy, which is brain surgery performed through an opening in the skull, are very interesting. And technology is always changing."

Myers is on the neurosurgery trauma team, whose members rotate being on call to respond to patients brought to the Aultman Emergency Department with head trauma. "It's a challenging commitment at times, being on call 24 hours a day," she shared. "When there's a trauma situation, the team needs to respond quickly."

Many types of neurosurgery require a stay in the surgical intensive care unit (SICU) or the neurosurgical unit. These units have private patient rooms with advanced patient-monitoring technology. The nurses are highly skilled in the care of neurosurgery patients and work closely with the neurosurgeons to monitor patients during recovery.

"We have worked together to build a patient-centered program," Weiner said. "Our highly trained physicians and staff use advanced medical technology to provide state-of-the-art, high-quality neurosurgical care in a compassionate manner."

Aultman Participates in State and National Programs to Improve Stroke Care

Three key initiatives drive stroke care in the United States

PRIMARY STROKE CENTER

The Joint Commission's Primary Stroke Center Certification Program was developed in collaboration with the American Stroke Association. The Primary Stroke Center designation recognizes facilities that make exceptional efforts to foster better patient outcomes in stroke care.

"Joint Commission certification ensures that patients benefit from the most recent advances in stroke treatment," said Angela McGee, associate vice president of critical care. "It also distinguishes Aultman Hospital as a leader in providing superb care that meets or exceeds best practices for improving the quality of life for our patients."

Aultman earned its initial Primary Stroke Center designation in 2007, was recertified in 2009 and will be reviewed again this year.

GET WITH THE GUIDELINES (GWTG)

GWTG-Stroke is a continuous quality improvement initiative from the American Heart Association and the American Stroke Association. The program helps ensure that stroke

“BY PARTICIPATING IN THESE THREE STROKE INITIATIVES, WE ARE ABLE TO IMPROVE OVERALL QUALITY OF STROKE CARE AND DECREASE THE GAP BETWEEN BEST PRACTICES AND ACTUAL PRACTICES.”

— ANGELA MCGEE, ASSOCIATE VP OF CRITICAL CARE

patients receive the appropriate treatment, medications and risk modification counseling.

Aultman Hospital was recognized as a GWTG pilot hospital in 2004 and earned subsequent bronze, silver and gold awards. Most recently, Aultman Hospital received the 2011 GWTG-Stroke Gold Plus Performance Achievement Award.

"The award recognizes Aultman Hospital's commitment and success in implementing excellent care for stroke patients, according to evidence-based guidelines," McGee

said. "The 'Plus' designation is an advanced level of recognition that acknowledges hospitals for their compliance in quality measures within the GWTG-Stroke Program."

OHIO COVERDELL REGISTRY

In 2001, Congress charged the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention with implementing state-based registries to measure and track acute stroke care. The data collected from the Coverdell Registries is used in efforts to improve the quality of stroke care.

The long-term objective of the Ohio Coverdell Registry is to ensure all Ohioans receive the highest level of available acute stroke care – to reduce untimely deaths, prevent disability and avoid recurrent strokes.

"By participating in these three stroke initiatives, we are able to improve overall quality of stroke care and decrease the gap between best practices and actual practices," McGee explained. "Continuous review of the entire stroke program helps Aultman provide the best possible care for stroke patients."

AULTMAN: A CENTER OF EXCELLENCE FOR...



STROKE AND NEUROSURGERY

a stroke can change your life

» Test your risk at AultmanStrokeAware.com

AULTMAN
is *WV* Hospital for Stroke Care.



■ (Above and Below) Members of the Aultman Stroke Team gather to receive the 2011 Get With The Guidelines-Stroke Gold Plus Performance Achievement Award.



AULTMAN



CENTER of EXCELLENCE



Neurosurgery/ Stroke

Trauma or illness involving the brain, spinal cord or nervous system can be a frightening experience for a patient and loved ones. Take comfort in knowing you are in the hands of some of the region's most skilled neurological experts, neurosurgeons and stroke specialists.



Heart

Aultman Hospital has been named one of the nation's 50 Top Cardiovascular Hospitals by Thomson Reuters for 2011. At the Aultman Heart Center, prevention is a priority. Our education and risk factor identification programs can help you keep your heart healthy.



Cancer

The Aultman Cancer Center is a fusion of ideas, technology, talent and compassion. The physicians associated with Aultman Cancer Center evaluate and design individual patient treatment plans based on the type, stage and aggressiveness of the patient's disease.



Women/Children

Together with our patients, the Aultman Birth Center is promoting and uniting families for life. We take a team approach to providing the best care for you and your baby — under one roof.



Emergency/ Trauma

Aultman's Emergency/Trauma Center, staffed by board-certified physicians, is designed to allow the fastest access possible to the latest in emergency-care technology.



Orthopaedics

Many orthopaedic problems need more than one medical service. You may require emergency room treatment, medical treatment, surgery, therapy, medical equipment for the home or intense on-site rehabilitation.



Critical Care Medicine

Going to an intensive care unit (ICU) can be a very emotional experience. Aultman patients receive specialized care from our Intensivist Program and our dedicated group of critical care nurses, critical care pharmacists, respiratory therapists and intensivists.

AULTMAN

Aultman is My Hospital™

AULTMAN TAKES TEAM APPROACH TO STROKE CARE

More than 500 times a year, patients rely on the Aultman Cerebrovascular Program for award-winning stroke care delivered by a multidisciplinary team

STROKE BASICS

A stroke is a sudden interruption or severe reduction in blood flow to part of the brain. Without an adequate supply of blood, the brain is damaged and body function is impaired.

There are two main types of stroke. The most common, called an "ischemic" stroke, results from blockage in an artery. The other type, a "hemorrhagic" stroke, occurs when a blood vessel leaks or bursts.

A transient ischemic attack (TIA) or "mini-stroke" temporarily disrupts blood flow through the brain. It produces stroke-like symptoms but doesn't cause lasting damage. Most strokes aren't preceded by TIAs. Of the people who have had one or more TIAs, however, more than a third will later have a stroke. Therefore, it is important to recognize and treat TIAs in order to reduce risk of a major stroke.

"Stroke is the leading cause of adult disability in the United States," said John Andrefsky, M.D., medical director of the Aultman Stroke Program. "Every 40 seconds, someone in the United States has a stroke. That's about 795,000 people a year. The number is expected to grow over the next decade due to increasing stroke incidence and a large aging population."

Stroke is a medical emergency, and 9-1-1 should be called immediately if someone shows signs of stroke. "It is also vital to treatment decisions to determine what time the patient was last seen with normal speech and body function," Andrefsky offered. "Administering the clot-busting drug called tissue plasminogen activator (tPA) in less than three hours of stroke symptom onset is ideal."

IMPROVEMENTS IN STROKE CARE

Over the years, stroke treatment has improved due to increased awareness and advanced imaging technology. "I think people are more aware of stroke symptoms and seek medical treatment faster, which helps provide better results," Andrefsky said. "From a technology standpoint, we now have MRIs in addition to CT scans that we relied on years ago."

In addition to awareness and technology, stroke care has become more consistent. "Thanks to government regulations and educational societies, stroke care has become more standardized," Andrefsky said. "Thirty years ago, there could be a big difference in the care patients received based on where they were being treated."

AULTMAN'S MULTIDISCIPLINARY STROKE TEAM

Patients who come to Aultman for stroke treatment are cared for by a variety of health care professionals. "It takes a true team effort to have a successful stroke treatment program," said Judy Westler, RN, stroke program coordinator. "Our system seeks ways to coordinate the highest quality of stroke prevention, community education, EMS, inpatient hospital care and post-acute care."

If a patient comes to Aultman via ambulance, EMS personnel play a pivotal role in providing time-sensitive treatment. Using the Cincinnati Prehospital Stroke Scale as their tool for identifying stroke symptoms, paramedics administer protocols including airway management, IV therapy and early notification that a stroke patient is en route to Aultman.

Once a patient arrives at Aultman, the emergency department (ED) has a system in place that provides fast



■ Jennifer Brackman, RN, performs a neurological exam on patient Grace Courtright.

STROKE WARNING SIGNS

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg — especially on one side of the body.
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding.
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination.
- Sudden, severe headache with no known cause.

STROKE IS A MEDICAL EMERGENCY. CALL 9-1-1 IMMEDIATELY!

evaluation of stroke patients. "Our team works together to meet or exceed the established benchmark treatment times," said Vu Phan, M.D., emergency medicine physician. "We are fortunate to have a CT and a stat lab in the ED to assist in timely diagnostics — plus 24/7 radiology, neurology and neurosurgery coverage. With great team effort, we have been able to get our average 'door to tPA administration time' under 60 minutes this year. That is well below the national benchmark."

Diagnostic imaging tools such as CT and MRI provide detailed information that influences stroke treatment decisions. When the Aultman Radiology Department is notified of a possible stroke patient, the goal is to complete the test within 25 minutes of the patient's arrival to the ED and have the results for the medical team within 45 minutes.

STROKE PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

THE AULTMAN CEREBROVASCULAR PROGRAM IS COMMITTED TO PROVIDING STATE-OF-THE-ART PREVENTION, TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION FOR OUR PATIENTS.

Aultman has nursing units that are dedicated to stroke patients, including staff members specially trained in best practices for stroke care. "Full implementation of acute care and secondary prevention guidelines is a critical step in saving the lives and improving outcomes of stroke patients," said Katie Wright, RN, director of the Memorial 4 North and 4 South nursing units. "We believe patients do better when educated about the disease process, their risk factors and how to modify them. Studies demonstrate that patients who are taught how to manage their risk factors while still in the hospital reduce their risk of a second stroke."

After a stroke patient is stabilized, therapy may be necessary to help the recovery process. Physical

therapists focus on the patient's movement, reducing pain and preventing problems that can occur after a stroke. Speech therapists concentrate on the patient's ability to communicate as well as swallow food and drinks. Occupational therapists help patients with dressing, bathing, managing household chores and adapting to their environment.

Depression is a common occurrence, as patients relearn basic tasks or struggle with loss of function. "Depression is always something we have to talk about with stroke patients," Andrefsky said. "From medications to psychological support, we let patients and families know what options are available."

Nutrition is an important component of post-stroke care. Dietary guidelines recommend food low in fat and sodium — and diets rich in fruits, vegetables and whole grains. High blood pressure is a major risk factor for stroke, so controlling blood pressure is critical in preventing a recurrent stroke.

About 12 percent of stroke patients are discharged to the Aultman Woodlawn Inpatient Rehabilitation Unit. The 30-bed facility offers private patient rooms and 24-hour care for patients with impairments that prevent them from engaging in everyday activities but who have potential for improvement. Members of the care team include physicians, certified rehabilitation nurses and therapists, social workers and dietitians.

The Aultman Woodlawn Inpatient Unit has earned accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) in medical rehabilitation with stroke specialty care. All admissions are approved by Timothy Hagen, D.O., medical director of inpatient rehabilitation, who is board certified in neurology, neurorehabilitation, neurovascular ultrasound and sleep medicine.

The members of the Aultman Stroke Team work together to help stroke patients achieve optimal outcomes. "We have a great team — including emergency physicians, intensivists, hospitalists, radiology, nurses, lab, pharmacy, social workers, therapy and rehabilitation," Andrefsky said. "Everyone brings enthusiasm to stroke care. I'm proud of the effort the stroke team delivers on a consistent basis."

AULTMAN NEUROSURGEONS



Jean-Claude Tabet, M.D.
Neurosurgery



Philip Immesoete, M.D.
Neurosurgery



Mark Weiner, M.D.
Neurosurgery
Medical Director of Surgery

ACUTE STROKE PHYSICIANS



John Andrefsky, M.D.
Neurology
Medical Director, Aultman Cerebrovascular Program



Vu Phan, M.D.
Emergency Medicine

JOIN THE AULTMAN STROKE SUPPORT GROUP

Together Helping Increase Neurological Knowledge (THINK)

MEETS THE THIRD THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH FROM 1 - 2:30 P.M.
Aultman Woodlawn

2821 Woodlawn Ave. N.W. in Canton

This group is for people who have had strokes, along with their families or caregivers. The environment promotes motivation, offers encouragement and provides an opportunity for discussion and sharing. The group is led by a licensed independent social worker.

Call 330-479-4871 or 330-479-4853 for more information or to register.