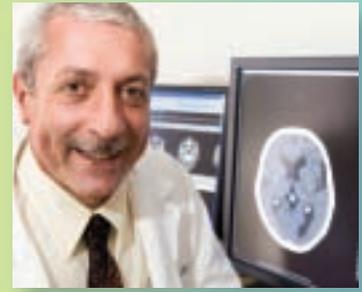


Q & A

with Dr. Sami Abdul-Malak

TOPIC: STROKE



Sami Abdul-Malak, MD, is board certified in neurology and has a special interest in stroke treatment and prevention.

What is a stroke?

A stroke occurs when blood flow to the brain is interrupted. When a stroke occurs, brain cells in the immediate area begin to die because they no longer receive the oxygen and nutrients they need to function.

What are the types of strokes?

A stroke can occur in two ways. In an ischemic stroke, a blood clot blocks or plugs a blood vessel or artery in the brain. About 80 percent of all strokes are ischemic. In a hemorrhagic stroke, a blood vessel in the brain breaks and bleeds into the brain. About 20 percent of strokes are hemorrhagic.

Why can't some victims identify stroke symptoms?

Because stroke injures the brain, one is not able to perceive one's own problems correctly. To a bystander, the stroke patient may seem unaware or confused. A stroke victim's best chance is if someone around her recognizes the stroke and acts quickly.

What should a bystander do?

Bystanders should know the signs and act in time. If you believe someone is having a stroke — if they lose the ability to speak, or move an arm or leg on one side, or experience facial paralysis on one side — call 911 immediately. Stroke is a medical emergency and minutes matter. Immediate treatment may save someone's life and enhance chances for successful rehabilitation and recovery.

Why is there a need to act fast?

Ischemic strokes, the most common strokes, can be treated with a drug called t-PA which dissolves artery-obstructing clots. The window of opportunity to use t-PA to treat stroke patients is three hours, but to be evaluated and receive treatment, patients need to get to the hospital in under 90 minutes. Studies have found that selected stroke patients who received t-PA within three hours of the onset of stroke symptoms were at least 30 percent more likely than placebo patients to recover from their stroke with little or no disability after three months.

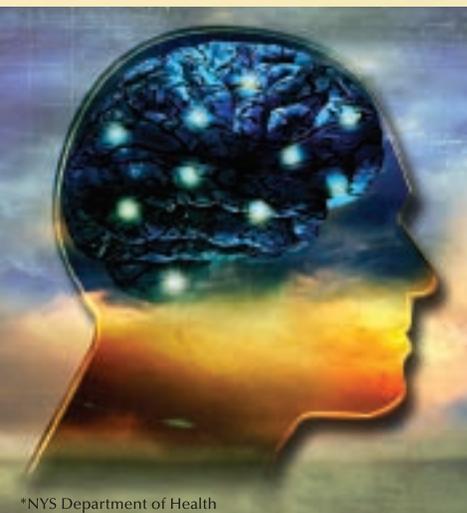
What are the risk factors for stroke?

There are things you can do to prevent stroke. High blood pressure increases your risk of stroke four to six times. Heart disease can double your risk of stroke. Your risk also increases if you smoke, have diabetes, sickle cell disease, high cholesterol or a family history of stroke.

What can you do to reduce the risk of stroke?

To reduce your risk of stroke monitor your blood pressure, track your cholesterol level, stop smoking, exercise regularly and find out if you should be taking a drug to reduce blood clotting.

For more information about Crouse Hospital's stroke program, contact Karen Sigona at (315) 470-7652.



The Area's **NEWEST** Designated* **Stroke Center**

**Minutes Matter.
Know the Warning Signs –
and Call 911!**



Your care. In our hands.

Sudden...

- ▶ confusion, trouble speaking, or understanding
- ▶ numbness or weakness of the face, arm, or leg, especially on one side of the body
- ▶ trouble walking, dizziness, or loss of balance or coordination
- ▶ severe headache with no known cause
- ▶ trouble seeing out of one or both eyes