

Health Awareness

A County Health Pool Publication



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Winning the War on Strokes

People can lower the death toll by knowing the symptoms and getting help fast.

Stroke is the third leading cause of death in the United States, with 700,000 new or recurrent attacks occurring annually.

According to an article in HealthDay News by Kathleen Doheny, the death toll wouldn't be that high if people would educate themselves about the warning signs and, when they occur, get themselves or their loved ones medical care as soon as possible.

"There are medications that can help dissolve a clot that is causing a stroke," explains Dr. William Buxton, a staff neurologist at the Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center. Tissue plasminogen activator (tPA) is the clot-busting drug most commonly given.

"But the vast majority of drugs can only be used in the first three hours from the last time the patient was known to be well," he adds. That means getting to the hospital quickly, because part of that three-hour window will be eaten up by an exam and tests to confirm the patient did indeed suffer a stroke.

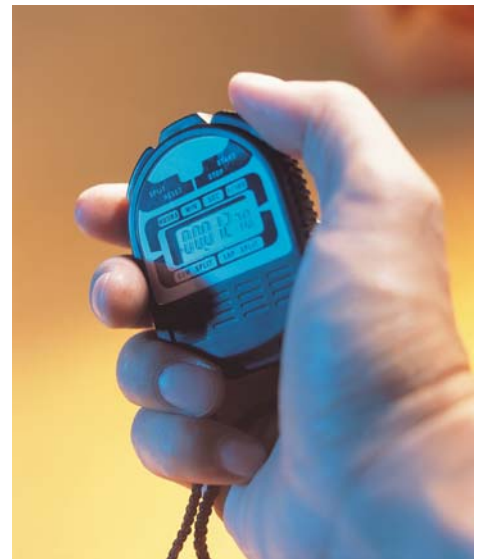
Getting to the hospital faster hinges on people becoming more aware of what might signal a

stroke. Among the common symptoms: sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body only; sudden confusion or trouble speaking or understanding words; sudden vision problems in either one or both eyes; sudden trouble walking or lack of coordination; sudden severe headache for no apparent reason.

Dr. Jane Brice, an assistant professor of emergency medicine at the University of North Carolina, says that the biggest mistake people make is to wait to see if the symptoms will go away before calling 911. She says, "They don't want to come to the emergency department for nothing. This is a mistake." She continues, "In order to have access to the most sophisticated therapies, the person must come immediately."

Most experts agree that people are becoming more aware of stroke. "Loved ones are fairly accurate in detecting strokes," Buxton says. "They might notice they are walking differently than they normally would or their speech is a little slurred." Buxton adds, "Sometimes the patients themselves recognize it. They might feel a little clumsy or have a sudden change in vision."

Buxton says, "If you have any sudden onset of neurological symptoms, you



Victims have about three hours from a stroke's onset to get lifesaving help

should call 911 immediately to get the process in motion for evaluation for possible stroke."

Public awareness has improved, but could improve more. Brice believes that we need to talk about stroke more. Brice says, "I think people need to review the warning signs and symptoms of stroke with their friends and relatives. Educating your neighbors, friends and relatives may save your life."

More information

For more information on strokes, including the common symptoms, visit the American Stroke Association website at www.strokeassociation.org or the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke website at www.ninds.nih.gov.

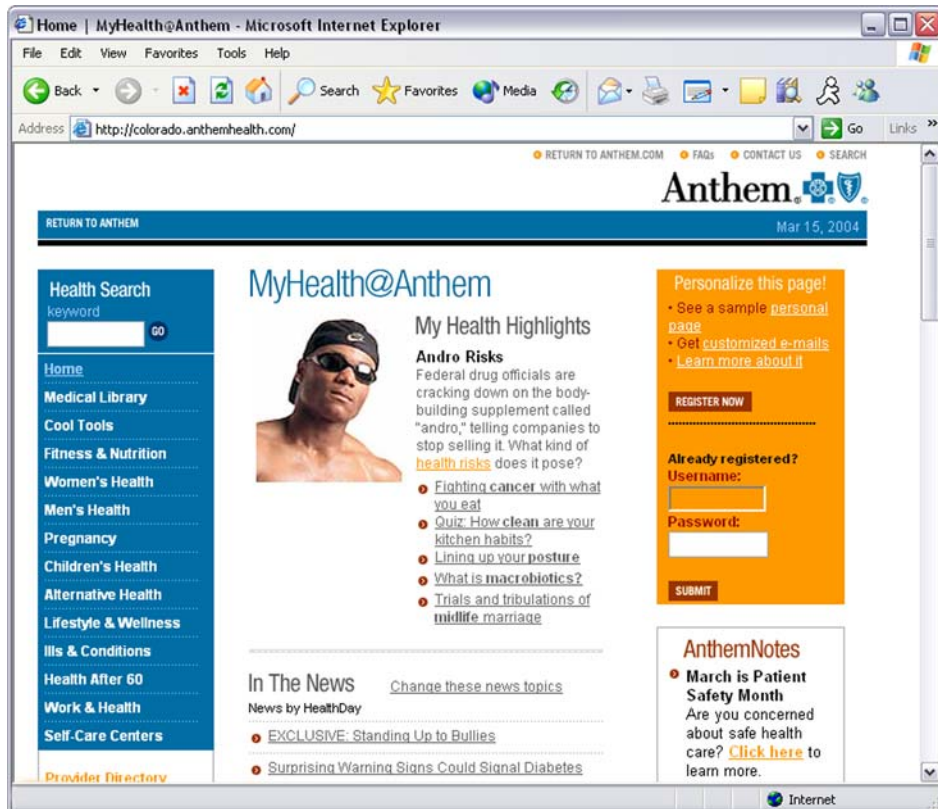
Are You Taking Advantage of Anthem's Resources?

The County Health Pool (CHP) chose to partner with Anthem for a number of reasons beyond simple claims management. A primary concern was making sure that CHP member participants like you had as many resources as possible available to assist in making health care management a real possibility.

For instance, diabetes is a very costly disease in terms of both time and money. How can a person suffering from diabetes best manage his or her health care besides simply visiting a doctor and taking prescribed medicine?

On Anthem's website, you will find over 25,000 articles related to managing a variety of illnesses, including diabetes.

You will also find personal calendars, quizzes, health assessments, a drug database, and personal life stories of other member participants who have experienced and conquered similar illnesses.



Anthem's website, www.anthem.com, provides information on many health topics

To experience these resources for yourself, go to www.anthem.com, then select your state, then click on myhealth@Anthem. You will then

see the web page we have pictured here on this page. Start exploring and enjoy!



Eating Healthy

A good prevention for many illnesses today is a proper diet. There is no law that healthy food has to taste bad. Next time you are home

on a blustery day, try this nutritional barley-mushroom soup along your favorite whole grain bread.

Barley-Mushroom Soup

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup raw barley
- 3 cups sliced mushrooms
- 1 cup diced potatoes
- 1 tbsp. garlic, minced
- 2 1/2 cups stock or broth
- 1/8 cup fresh parsley, minced
- 1/2 cup apple juice
- 1/8 tsp. cayenne
- 1 cup sliced onion

Instructions:

Place barley and potatoes in pot and cover with stock and juice. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for 45 minutes or until barley is soft. Remove 1/2 cup liquid for cooking onion. Cook onion in broth over medium heat. When onion is soft, add mushrooms and cook at high heat until liquid is evaporated. Add onions, mushrooms and remaining ingredients to the reserved potatoes, barley and stock. Cook 25 minutes longer. Serves 4.

Source: American Health Magazine.