

Stroke Alert

Lehigh Valley Health Network

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Stroke Alert



**American Heart Association
American Stroke Association
CERTIFICATION**
Meets standards for
Comprehensive Stroke Center



**American Heart Association
American Stroke Association
CERTIFIED**
Meets standards for
Primary Stroke Center

May is Stroke Awareness Month

Upcoming Conferences

- Sept 18: Stroke Quintessentials (Reading)
- Sept 25-26: AANN stroke care conference (Chicago)
- Oct 23: LVH Hazelton stroke conference (Hazelton)

For more info, contact Erin_M.Conahan@lvhn.org

May is the designated month for stroke awareness. Each May the stroke center is busy with community activities raising awareness of stroke risk factors, symptoms, and the need to call 9-1-1 if stroke symptoms are noted.

This year has been a celebration for the stroke program after successfully completing Comprehensive Stroke recertification at Cedar Crest in August and Primary Stroke recertification at Muhlenberg in October. During both sur-



veys the surveyors acknowledged the involvement of interdisciplinary teams and overall knowledge of staff that contribute to patient outcomes. The commitment and dedication to patient

care, on-going education, and continued quality improvement was noted by the survey teams.

Congratulations and thank you to all who care for our stroke patients.

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NEW: Stroke Center Newsletter

How do you keep a network of over 9,000 employees updated on all things stroke?

Hopefully through this newsletter. The idea is to reach as many of our colleagues as possible to help get the stroke message to

the public.

Some recurring columns will be: Meet our Team, where a different member of the stroke team will be highlighted; case review; links to recently released guidelines and articles; and upcoming confer-

ences.

Your input is needed! If you have suggestions for a great title for this newsletter, or if there is a stroke topic that you would like to know more about, please contact Erin_M.Conahan@lvhn.org.

Brain Warriors: Stroke Support Group



Stroke is the leading cause of adult disability in the United States. Recovery is an ongoing process that continues after discharge from an acute or

subacute rehab setting. Oftentimes it is a family member that assumes the role of caregiver. This may greatly change the dynamics of a relationship.

Learning how to adjust to life after stroke for patients and their caregivers is one of the goals of the Brain Warriors Support Group. It is a

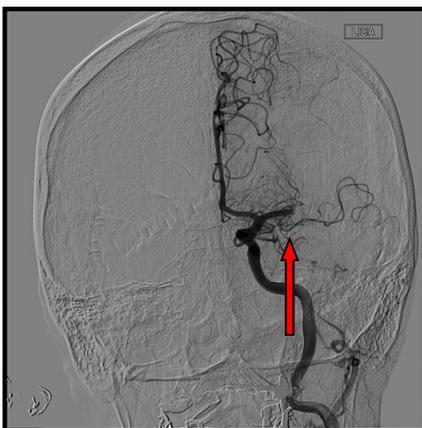
way for survivors and their caregivers to share experiences and concerns with those in similar situations. In addition it gives patients an opportunity to socialize.

Sessions are held the third Monday of each month at 1100 in Kasych Pavillion ECC 4. For more information please call (610) 402-CARE.

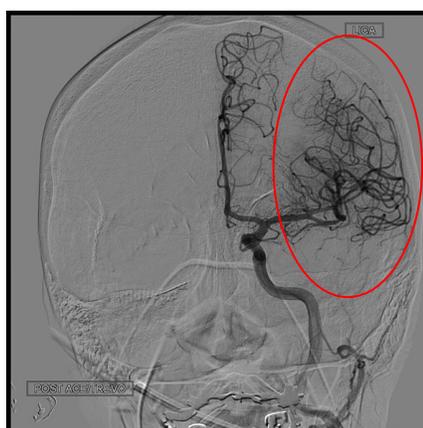
Advancing stroke treatment: Case Study

A daughter is speaking with her mother on the telephone when she realizes her mother's speech has changed. The daughter hangs up and calls the assisted living facility where the mother resides. When staff go to check on the mother she is found with right sided weakness and difficulty speaking. EMS activated a pre-hospital stroke alert and the team met the patient in the ED. Her NIHSS was 25. The patient presented quickly and had no contraindications to IV tPA. But she still had a clot in her left middle cerebral artery, a large vessel that supplies blood to the brain.

Neurologist Megan Leary consulted with neurointerventionalist Neil Patel and the two decided the patient would be appropriate for endovascular therapy. Dr. Patel inserted a catheter into the femoral artery, similar to what is done during a cardiac cath, and was able to reach the clot in the brain. Using a combination of a vacuum catheter (Penumbra) and stent retriever (Trevor), Dr. Patel was able to remove the clot and restore blood flow. The following day the patient's exam was almost normal; she still had some difficulty with



Before IR procedure: abrupt stoppage of flow



After IR procedure flow re-established

word finding. Her weakness completely resolved.

This case highlights the findings of recent research trials demonstrating intravenous thrombolysis (IV tPA) plus rapid thrombectomy in strokes caused by large vessel occlusions (LVO) improves patient functions more than thrombolysis alone. The interventional team performs about 70 of these procedures a year, the 2nd highest in the mid-Atlantic region.

Spot a stroke...FAST

Lehigh Valley Health Network
Stroke Center

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Phone: (610) 402-9008
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LEHIGH VALLEY HOSPITAL
Comprehensive Stroke Center

Ask your healthcare professional how to reduce your risk of stroke.
TO REDUCE YOUR RISK:

1. Know your blood pressure.
2. Find out whether you have atrial fibrillation.
3. If you smoke, stop.
4. Find out if you have high cholesterol.
5. If diabetic, follow recommendations to control your diabetes.
6. Include exercise in your daily routine.
7. Enjoy a lower-sodium (salt), lower-fat diet.

When stroke strikes act **FAST**.

FACE Drooping	ARM Weakness	SPEECH Difficulty	TIME to Call 911

LVHN.org/stroke

Lehigh Valley Health Network

American Heart Association
American Stroke Association
VERIFICATION
Primary Stroke Center
Vascular Stroke Center

Meet our team: Dr. John Castaldo, Acting Director Stroke Program



The stroke program at LVHN began to take shape in 1999

under the guidance of Dr. Castaldo. At this time it was noted that centers that used ordersets and followed clinical practice guidelines when caring for stroke patients had better outcomes. LVHN was an early adopter of this process, obtaining Primary Stroke Certification when it was first introduced in 2004.

In addition to being a board certified vascular neurologist, Dr. Castaldo is also passionate about neurologic research and educating health professionals and students. He is a published author, with Dr. Lawrence Levitt, using stories from the patient and provider perspectives to enhance understanding of neurologic disease and patient experience.

Dr. Castaldo is a dynamic personality, frequently lecturing at local, regional, and national conferences. In addition to maintaining an office practice he still takes call as part of the neurology hospital rotation.

The stroke program continues to grow and evolve under the guidance of Dr. Castaldo.