

ISSUE

0

October
2021

QUARTERLY
NEWSLETTER
OF CRMC
STROKE
SUPPORT
GROUP

StrokeSupportQuarterly

About our Stroke Support Group

Capital Region Medical Center Stroke Support Group is available for survivors and others interested in increasing their understanding of the emotional, social and educational needs of stroke survivors. Research has shown that survivors who have a strong social support network have better long term functional abilities! If you have someone that is interested in receiving this newsletter, please contact us!

Stroke Support Group Leader Team

Crista Parker, Occupational Therapist, cparker@crmc.org

Stephanie Groves, Speech/Language Pathologist, sgroves@crmc.org

Jason Groene, Physical Therapist, jgroene@crmc.org

Email the leaders, or call (573) 632-5614, if you have questions or what to get on the mailing list



this issue

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Evolution of Monthly Meetings due to COVID

The stroke support group at Capital Region Medical Center (CRMC) might look a little different now than it did a year ago. For safety reasons, the group has been unable to hold the monthly in person meetings. Now, survivors and caregivers can connect through a quarterly published newsletter: **Stroke Support Quarterly**.

CRMC is dedicated to delivering high quality care and keeping everyone as safe and healthy as able, which is why the stroke support group has not been able to have in person meetings for over a year. While the stroke support leaders are still hoping for a return to in person meetings in the near future, this newsletter will serve as a way to provide group connection and community during a time of uncertainty.

Let the team introduce to you the evolution in our stroke support group care—the **Stroke Support Quarterly!** Until further notice, the group will suspend in person meetings due to concerns of COVID-19 to our potentially medically fragile group. Instead, CRMC will distribute a **quarterly** stroke support group newsletter. Four times a year, CRMC will send a newsletter that highlights topics important after a stroke, group member biographies, community happenings, and more. The leader team (Crista, Jason, and Stephanie) will also put together valuable information and tips on strategies to continue with self-improvement.

Welcome to the evolution for our stroke support group—The Stroke Support Quarterly!

Contact the leader team to get on the mailing list!



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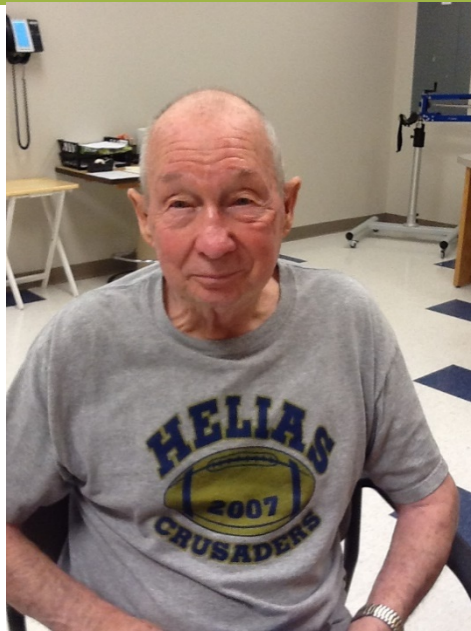
Principles for Improving Fine Motor Coordination

One of the more common issues after having a stroke is hemiparesis (or weakness) in one arm or hand. With this weakness, coordination limitations can happen that limit how you are able to tie shoes or button buttons. Here are some tips to help!

- Raise the finger from palm flat on the table
- Hold a small object in the palm of your hand and try to move to the fingers
- Hold the small object with your finger and thumb, then slowly work it back to the palm
- Pick up an adult coloring book and work on coloring
- Write out your grocery list or text it to yourself
- Try some typing games on the computer to work on keystroke accuracy
- Work with your shirt buttons on a table, or try to lace your shoelaces

These are a few suggestions! Try a few....I bet you can challenge yourself and see improvements!

If you need more guidance on how to improve fine motor coordination, the Occupational Therapy team at CRMC



Survivor Spotlight: Mark Eveler

Personal story of surviving and thriving after a traumatic medical event

Meet Mark Eveler. He lives in Wardsville, MO with his wife, Laverne. He is an avid Blair Oaks Falcon and does not miss a football game. Unfortunately, he suffered a stroke on April 24, 2021.

This stroke started with mild weakness in his legs and face. In the next few days, he would experience an extension of his stroke (meaning that his symptoms of the initial stroke worsened) and left him with more significant weakness throughout his left side (arm, leg, face). He has gone through inpatient rehabilitation (3 weeks), home health (3 weeks), and outpatient therapy services at the Healthplex. Previously, Mark had several medical conditions that likely contributed to his stroke: coronary artery disease (with a bypass and 6 stents), Atrial Fibrillation, Diabetes Mellitus, and Hypertension.

On his first day of rehabilitation, Mark remembers having aspiration (or food/drink not moving down the esophagus correctly) and had to be placed on "thickened liquids". Trying to drink his honey thick coffee was "the worst thing" he remembers from his time in rehabilitation. Luckily, this improved and now he is back to drinking his morning coffee in typical fashion: black.

"This journey has been very difficult, but I'm thankful for how far I have come and all the support along the way"

His arm and leg weakness improved as well. He quickly moved from a wheelchair for mobility to a hemiwalker, then to a single point cane. Now, he is not using any assistive walking device. Initially, he required assistance to move his left arm, had a lot of swelling, and little finger movement. He had

trouble with basic activities of daily living (like putting on his socks or tying his shoes) partly since he was not able to grasp and release objects. Again, due to his dedication, he is now able to perform most tasks himself.

Mark has been a dedicated, hard worker since the first sign of his stroke. His wife has been a big motivator for him and supports him along the way, which has helped maintain his gusto for recovery. Mark says that his biggest accomplishments so far are being able to tie his shoes by himself, go up his basement stairs, and walk long distances without any assistive device. He doesn't show any signs of slowing down and is still currently in therapy. He says, "This journey has been difficult, but I'm thankful for how far I have come and all the support along the day."



Sleep Apnea and Cardiovascular Fitness

From the American Stroke Association:

According to new research, severe sleep apnea is associated with major changes in key arteries and could speed up “vascular aging”—a thickening or stiffening of some blood vessels that causes changes to function and structure of the vessel. This “vascular aging” plays a large role in cardiovascular disease, which is a risk factor for stroke.

Sleep apnea affects 34% of middle aged men and 17% of middle aged women. This has been linked to other stroke risk factors like high blood pressure, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease.

According to the American Heart Association, between 40-80% of people with cardiovascular disease also have sleep apnea. Symptoms of sleep apnea include snoring, fragmented sleep, and lapses in breathing. In this research study from Europe, they found those with sleep apnea showed “a marked accelerated aging of their arteries when compared to similar people without sleep apnea”. Specifically, adults with sleep apnea had a 214% increased risk of an enlarged carotid diameter, a structural sign of vascular aging.

Call for action

Talk with your doctor if you feel like you may have sleep apnea. You might need to be screened for this illness.

If you have already been diagnosed with sleep apnea, it's important to manage cardiovascular health by controlling your cholesterol, monitoring your blood pressure and blood sugar, stop smoking, get physically active, and eat a healthy diet.

CRMC offers sleep disorder services. Please contact the sleep disorders team at (573) 632-5394 to see if they can

EYE ON IT Current Industry Trends

The Importance of Heart Health

Cardiovascular disease is ranked the number 1 reason for death according to the American Heart Association and experts believe this will continue for years to come as long term effects of COVID-19 evolve. Globally there has been a 17% increase in deaths linked to this in the last decade. Cardiovascular disease is also highly correlated to risk for stroke, which is reason to take notice. Cardiovascular disease includes medical diagnoses like the following: coronary heart disease, atherosclerosis, atrial fibrillation, and cardiomyopathy. High blood pressure can be a sign of cardiovascular disease.

EYE ON IT



The following are ways to control heart disease:

- Stop smoking
- Regularly exercise
- Reduce salt intake
- Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables
- Limit alcohol

This Month's Q&A

Q: What are warning signs of having a stroke?

A: It is important to seek medical attention quickly if you feel like you or someone you know is suffering a stroke. It is also important to always call for an ambulance so that the medical team at the incoming hospital can alert the stroke team for quicker care upon arrival. Time is important!

Remember the BE FAST arynonym.

- **B**alance: sudden loss of balance or coordination
- **E**yes: sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- **F**ace: sudden drooping on one side of the face
- **A**rm: sudden weakness in one arm or leg
- **S**peech: sudden trouble with speech or understanding
- **T**ime: time to call 911



Mid Missouri Farmers Market

Eat healthy for your health and support local!

All located in Jefferson City, MO and through October 2021

- **Capital City Farmer's Market, Saturdays, 8:30-11:30 am**
Orchelen's Parking Lot on the Missouri Blvd.
- **Lincoln University Farmer's Market, Saturdays, 8:30 - 11:30 am**
1002 Chestnut St.
- **Cole County Farmers Market, Tuesdays & Fridays 4-6 pm, Saturday 2-4 pm**
3600 County Club Road (Capital Mall parking lot)

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