

Family history raises odds of having a stroke at young age

All of the stroke patients were evaluated by a neurologist, who determined the type of stroke they'd had.

FAMILY HISTORY

Researchers found that a family history of vascular disease at age 65 or younger is an independent risk factor for both large-vessel and small-vessel stroke. Compared to controls, stroke patients who had large-vessel strokes were more than twice as likely (2.24 odds ratio) to have an immediate family member who had suffered stroke at age 65 or younger or a family member who had a heart attack.

When the analysis was limited to stroke patients age 65 and younger, the significance of family history increased. Participants with large-vessel strokes were almost three times as likely (2.93 odds ratio) as controls to have an immediate family member who had suffered stroke at

age 65 or younger or a family member who had a heart attack. Those with small-vessel stroke were more than three times as likely (3.15 odds ratio) to have this family history compared to the controls.

The findings suggest that studies investigating the genetic basis of ischemic stroke that focus on specific subtypes in younger age groups may be more effective, the authors say. The research team has begun analyzing DNA samples of patients with large- and small-vessel disease to try to find genes that predispose people to those two types of strokes.

Identifying the genes might lead to a better understanding of the disease processes involved in different types of stroke, Jerrard-Dunne says. Future development of gene therapies for stroke might have a better chance of success if studies focus on selected patient groups in whom genetic factors are most important, she notes.

For more information on stroke, visit the American Stroke Association Web site: strokeassociation.org

Family history was found to be a risk factor for two common types of stroke. British researchers report in a recent issue of Stroke: Journal of the American Heart Association.

"Traditional risk factors for stroke, such as high blood pressure, smoking, diabetes and high cholesterol, only explain about half of all stroke cases," says Dr. Paula Jerrard-Dunne, a clinical research fellow working with Dr. Hilary Markus at St. George's Hospital Medical School in London. "There is growing interest in the role of genetic risk factors for stroke."

Previous studies found conflicting results about the association between family history and stroke, perhaps because they usually lumped all types of strokes together, rather than evaluating the different disease processes separately, Jerrard-Dunne says.

In this study, researchers sought to determine the impact of family history on different types of ischemic stroke.

Ischemic stroke, the most common type of stroke, is caused by a blood clot that obstructs blood flow to the brain. A common cause is a build-up of cholesterol-like plaques that narrow the large arteries in the neck (carotid arteries). This is called "large-vessel disease."

Ischemic strokes also can occur when small blood vessels in the brain are blocked. Known as small-vessel or lacunar strokes, they are closely associated with high blood pressure. Small-vessel strokes are usually less severe than large-vessel strokes but can nonetheless damage brain tissue. Small vessel disease is a major source of dementia.

The study involved 1,000 Caucasian patients (average age about 65) with ischemic stroke. They were compared with 500 stroke-free individuals who were matched for age and sex. Family history of heart attack and stroke was determined by interviews, and researchers documented conventional stroke risk factors, such as age, gender, smoking status, blood pressure, diabetes, cholesterol abnormalities and coronary heart disease. Complete data, including family history, were available for 944 stroke patients and 789 controls.

MAY
Thyroid
The Michigan Thyroid Support Group will meet 6:30 p.m. Monday, May 12, at the Plymouth Library, 223 S. Main Street, Plymouth. Endocrinologist Dr. Al Kassab will discuss how he treats thyroid disease. For more information on the group, contact Tracy Green at mthyroid@yahoo.com or (734) 453-7945.

Cancer
Beaumont Hospital's Patient Education Series will present information about relaxation techniques for coping with cancer noon to 1 p.m. Tuesday, May 13, at the Beaumont Cancer Center, First floor classroom, 3601 W. Thirteenth Mile Road, Royal Oak. Call (248) 964-3430.

First Aid
The American Red Cross offers Standard First Aid w/AED and Infant/Child CPR 10 to 10 p.m. May 13-27 and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. May 18, 23 and 30 at the Livonia Service Center, 36650 Five Mile Road, Livonia. Two certificates are issued for successful completion. Fee: \$40. For course content information, call (313) 494-2140 or log onto www.serenetecross.org.

Cravings
Do you respond to stress with cravings for chocolate, steak, or potato chips? Biochemist Sandy Baumgartner will teach you the physiological reasons for such cravings in her class "Why Women Crave Chocolate & Men Love Steak" 6:30-8:40 p.m. Tuesday, May 13-27, at the Center for Lifelong Learning, Henry Ford Community College, 22586 Ann Arbor Trail (at Warren), Dearborn Heights. Cost is \$59 plus a \$5 material fee to the instructor. Nurses may register for nursing contact hours at an additional fee. To register, call (313) 317-1500.

Grief Support
Angela Hospice, 14000 Herburch Road, Livonia, offers ongoing grief support groups every second and fourth Tuesday. Next meeting is 1 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. May 13 and May 27. Call Joan Leg at (734) 464-9700.

Chiopracactic funday
Loven Family Chiopracactic Wellness Center, 23280 Farmington Road, Farmington (2 blocks south of Grand River), will participate in "Kids Day America" noon to 3 p.m. Saturday, May 17. Complementary scoliosis and posture screenings, plus computerized spinal screenings. Representatives from the Farmington Police and Fire Departments will display a fire truck and provide safety tips for children. Free balloons, gifts and food. Call (248) 416-4494.

Cancer loss
The U-M Comprehensive Cancer Center's Grief and Loss Program will offer "Coping Through Transitions," a support group for adults who have lost a loved one to cancer, 6:30-8 p.m. Wednesdays, May 14 to June 11. The group is held at the Michigami Arboretum's James D. Reader, Jr. Urban Environmental Education Center in Ann Arbor. Fee: Register by May 11. Call (734) 615-4012.

Cosmetic labels
Do you really know what's in your cosmetics and skin care products? Learn how to read and interpret product labels, and discover ways to enhance your unique beauty using natural products. Enroll in "Natural Beauty" offered 6:30-8:30 p.m. Thursdays, May 15 at the Center for Lifelong Learning, Henry Ford Community College, 22586 Ann Arbor Trail (at Warren), Dearborn Heights. 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Thursday, May 15. Cost: \$21. To register, call (313) 317-1500.

Prostate
Dr. Vishalmpayan of the Weinberg Cancer Center will discuss "Prostate

ON GOING
Self-help groups
Anyone seeking information on a variety of self-help groups may visit the Michigan Self-Help Clearing House at the Michigan Protection Advocacy Service Web site, www.mpsa.org. If you have a disability rights issue, contact the MPAS at (800) 288-5923.

Medicare counseling
Senior citizens with Medicare questions and concerns can get assistance through Beaumont Hospital's Department of Older Adult Services. The department's staff of trained volunteers can provide counseling on Medicare, long-term care insurance, and insurance plans that supplement Medicare. Call toll free Senior Resource Line at (800) 328-2241 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday to make an appointment.

Bipolar
The MDDA-Bipolar Support Group meets 3-5 p.m. the second and fourth Thursday at Beaumont Hospital, Administration Bldg., 3601 W. 13 Mile

Road, Royal Oak. Call Kathie at (248) 544-0371.
Divorce support
The Women's Resource Center at Schoolcraft College will offer a "Divorce Support Group" 7-9 p.m. the second and fourth Tuesday of each month. Call the WRC at (734) 482-4443.

Bereavement
"Together to Share," a grief support group, meets 10 a.m. the first Monday of each month at American House on Middlebell Road in Livonia. The group meets 3 p.m. the third Thursday of the month at Dorwin Nursing Center on Middlebell Road in Livonia. Both groups are facilitated by a bereavement coordinator from Heartland Hospice in Southfield. Call (800) 770-9559.

Overeaters Anonymous
Support group for overeaters meets 7 p.m. every Friday at Providence Park-Novi, 47601 Grand River Avenue, Novi. Helpline: (313) 438-HELP or (248) 474-9456.
Alcoholics Anonymous
Everyone is welcome to Providence Hospital-sponsored AA meetings held: Noon every Tuesday and Thursday at Providence Medical Office Center-Novi, 39500 W. 10 Mile Road (at Haggerty), Novi. Call (248) 348-9362, noon every Wednesday at Mission Health Medical Center-Livonia, 37595 Seven Mile Road, Livonia. Call (734) 955-3616, 6:45 to 8:30 p.m. every Wednesday at Providence Hospital, 16001 W. Nine Mile Road, Southfield. Call (248) 333-4911.

Gambling
The Gamblers Anonymous Support Groups meets 7:30-9 p.m. Mondays at St. Mary Mercy Hospital, 36475 Five Mile Road, Livonia, in Classroom 4. Call (734) 655-2944 or (800) 494-0277.

Cancer
Join "Focus on Living," a cancer support group offered 7-8:30 p.m. the first Wednesday of each month at St. Mary Mercy Hospital, Livonia. The group is designed to help cancer patients and families come together to help each other in living with a cancer diagnosis and treatment. Co-sponsored by the American Cancer Society, Call (734) 655-9940 or (800) 494-0277.

Tremor Disorder Support
Shari Finsilver of Orchard Lake leads a local support group for those who suffer from Essential Tremor, a debilitating and incurable movement disorder. The group meets 7-8:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month at Temple Trail, 5725 Walnut Lake Road in West Bloomfield. Contact Finsilver at (248) 683-4138 or Finsilver@earthlink.net, or visit www.tremorsupport.com. To learn more about the International Tremor Foundation, visit www.international-tremor-foundation.org or call (888) 387-3367.

Parents Supporting Parents
Parents coping with the loss of an infant through miscarriage, stillbirth or newborn death meet 7 p.m. the third Monday of the month at Providence Hospital-Southfield, 16001 W. Nine Mile Road, Southfield. Call (248) 649-5342.

Stroke
The St. John Health System-Provident offers a Stroke Support Group 7 p.m. the first Thursday of the month at Providence Park-Novi, 47601 Grand River Ave., Novi. Call (248) 465-4190.

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Saturday, June 14, 2003

HONORING OUR MILITARY EVERYWHERE

On Sunday, May 25th, The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers will be running a Special Veterans Memorial Day Page to remember those brave men and women who gave their lives in the service of their country.

For \$2 per line you can place a special remembrance message for the veteran that you would like to be remembered on this page. You can include a picture along with your message for an additional \$10.

Just call, fax or e-mail your message by Monday, May 10th, to:

1-800-579-7355
Fax: 734 983-2232
e-mail: civilian@oe.hometownnet.com

All messages must be prepaid and if sending a photo, please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope so we can return your picture.