Our Mission
The primary mission of the RTH Stroke Foundation is to prevent stroke. We do this in two ways:
• Conducting community education seminars and screenings
• Providing stroke survivors and their families with education and support

Our Vision
We are driven to eradicate strokes as much as is humanly possible and to improve the quality of life of stroke survivors by doing all we can to mitigate the after-effects of strokes.

The Roxanna Todd Hodges Stroke Foundation
23382 Mill Creek Drive Suite 130
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STRADES AGAINST STROKE

WOMEN AND HEART DISEASE
THE RISK FACTORS AND WARNING SIGNS

Of all the cardiovascular diseases, stroke unfortunately favors women over men.

A stroke is when the circulation of blood in your brain is not right, either because a blood clot is blocking a blood vessel or a blood vessel bursts, which is usually due to high blood pressure. Whereas stroke is the 5th leading cause of death among men, it is the 3rd leading cause of death among women. Part of why strokes affect women more than men has to do with women living longer than men. With living longer, you are more likely to suffer from various diseases, of which stroke is no exception. Yet, there are certain things unique to the makeup of a woman that every woman should be aware of to help prevent strokes.

The RTH Stroke Foundation/OC Stroke Association is a nonprofit 501 (C) (3) Corporation.

If you would like to be removed from our mailing list please call 949-305-8450.
Tax ID Information is available upon request by calling (888) 794-9466.

Any reprinting of this newsletter without prior consent is prohibited.

This Newsletter is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care or advice. Only your doctor can diagnose and treat a medical problem.

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**Our Goal**
Helping to support any stroke survivor along with their family, friends, and caregivers is the goal of the Stroke Survivor Recovery Program.

Our staff is committed to caring for each individual and their families during your transitional period. Our nurse is available to answer all your questions by phone, office visit or a personal visit to your home.

All RTH Stroke Foundation SSRP services are FREE of charge to assist you with care coordination along with long-term management.

We understand how difficult this time can be, for everyone involved, which is why we offer group or individual counseling.

If you or your loved one is in need of assistance following a stroke, please call the RTH Stroke Foundation at 888-794-9466.

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**10th Annual Women’s Heart & Stroke Seminar**

**Long Beach Memorial**

Saturday, Feb. 11, 2017 | 7:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.

- 7:30 a.m. - Registration and screenings begin
- 8:45 a.m. - Seminar
- All-Day Screenings

- Blood pressure
- Cardiac ultrasound
- Cholesterol panel
- Blood glucose (non-fasting)

The cost is $25 (continental breakfast and lunch provided). When two or more register together, tickets are $20 per person.

Register Today!
(562) 933-0100

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**AND STROKE**

By Ben Forer

The most common way women present with heart disease is dead, dead on arrival,” Dr. Kathy Magliato, cardiothoracic surgeon at Saint John’s Health Center in Los Angeles, told ABC News. “Women tend to downplay their symptoms, and they tend to wait longer to come to the hospital, and that’s why they die at home. Every year since 1984 more women than men have died of heart disease, said Magliato, and 50 percent of all women never experience chest pains.”

Top 5 Symptoms of Heart Disease in Women

1. Fatigue
2. Shortness of Breath
3. Indigestion, Upper Abdominal Pain or Nausea
4. Jaw or Throat Pain
5. Arm Pain (Especially the left arm)

While heart disease is the No. 1 killer of both men and women, in recent years, as deaths attributed to the disease have declined, the drop has been much less significant in women.

“We have to think of this disease as a woman’s disease, it’s not a man’s disease,” said Magliato, who is also president of the American Heart Association of Greater Los Angeles. “The symptoms between men and women are so drastically different that what women believe is heart disease is really men’s heart disease.”

Another reason heart disease is more difficult to diagnose in women than in men is that abnormal blood vessel function happens on a smaller scale in women.

“Women tend to get heart disease at the level of microvessels, which are very small, very tiny vessels that supply the blood to the heart,” said Magliato. “Men tend to get blockages in the larger blood vessels of the heart, the blood vessels that we see when we do our typical studies for diagnosing heart disease.”

Magliato said that the best precautionary step a woman can take against heart disease, in addition to eating well and becoming active, is knowing the symptoms. She said women need to listen to their bodies, and if they have one or more of these top symptoms, they should see a doctor immediately.

If you have migraines, the main thing to prevent strokes is to control migraines while avoiding smoking and estrogen-containing contraception. There are certain measures that all women can do to ensure a stroke-free life. First and foremost is living a healthy life. This means doing moderately intense aerobic exercise at least 30 minutes a session, 5 days per week. This also means eating healthy, taking in a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, grains, nuts, olive oil, and low in saturated fats. Abstain from cigarette smoking, and limit alcohol to one drink or less per day for nonpregnant women. Because depression is associated with an increased risk of stroke, being open to being evaluated by a therapist and receiving treatment for depression will help reduce that risk. If you are a woman equal or greater than 65 years of age, aspirin could be helpful in preventing strokes, especially if you have other health issues, including diabetes and hypertension. Please talk to your medical doctor before taking aspirin though because it can increase the risk of bleeding.
Starting with the most common reason why people have strokes is high blood pressure. High blood pressure generally goes up with age, and this is even more notable among women. 75% of women over the age of 60 have high blood pressure. Also, women with high blood pressure tend to have other health issues compared to men. This includes high cholesterol and obesity. It becomes particularly important as women age to have regular checkups with their primary medical doctor to make sure their blood pressure is controlled. Another special group that needs close follow-up for blood pressure are women who develop hypertension when pregnant. Unfortunately, those diagnosed with high blood pressure during pregnancy have a higher risk of having strokes later in life, even years later. So, it becomes especially important for these women to follow-up with a doctor regularly after their pregnancy.

Another common and preventable reason for strokes in women is atrial fibrillation. Atrial fibrillation is when the heart beats irregularly so that the heart does not do as good of a job of pumping blood throughout your body. When that happens, there is a high chance of a blood clot forming in your heart. The clot can be pumped up to a blood vessel in your brain, blocking it, and causing a stroke. Unfortunately, atrial fibrillation occurs more often as people age, and with this, strokes due to atrial fibrillation. This is especially true for women. Among those with atrial fibrillation, women greater than 75 years old are more likely to have strokes than men of the same age. Knowing whether you have atrial fibrillation and talking to your doctor about it is important for women, as there are medications available to prevent strokes.

Certain conditions unique to women may increase the risk of strokes. While very uncommon, strokes during pregnancy can occur, and when they do, they are likely to occur during the third trimester and up to a month after delivery. The combination of hormonal changes, the body being swollen, and possibly, the blood being thicker than normal all contribute to the possibility of having a stroke when being pregnant. The main things to prevent strokes when being pregnant is to have a healthy lifestyle with well controlled blood pressure. Another condition unique to women is contraception. There is a small risk of strokes with taking estrogen containing contraception, including pills, rings, and patches. This risk is especially noted among women age 40 and older. While migraines are not unique to women, they occur more frequently in women compared to men. Migraines with aura slightly increases the risk of stroke, especially if the woman is older. While migraines are not unique to women, they occur more frequently in women compared to men. Migraines with aura slightly increases the risk of stroke, especially if the woman is older. While migraines are not unique to women, they occur more frequently in women compared to men. Migraines with aura slightly increases the risk of stroke, especially if the woman is older. While migraines are not unique to women, they occur more frequently in women compared to men. Migraines with aura slightly increases the risk of stroke, especially if the woman is older.

The main thing to prevent strokes among those who are taking estrogen-containing contraception is to avoid smoking, regular checkups with your doctor, and to have a healthy lifestyle. Hormonal therapy for the peri-menopausal or post-menopausal should not be used to prevent strokes; in fact, hormonal therapy can slightly increase the risk of stroke, especially if the woman is older. While migraines are not unique to women, they occur more frequently in women compared to men. Migraines with aura slightly increases the risk of stroke, especially if they smoke and take estrogen-containing contraception.

Joseph Kim, MD, Vascular Fellow, Keck Medical Center of USC

Warning Signs for Stroke

• Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm, leg. One side of the body
• Sudden confusion or trouble understanding
• Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
• Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
• Sudden severe headache with no known cause

Risk Factors for Stroke

~High Blood Pressure ~ Heart Disease
~Diabetes ~High Cholesterol ~Sleep Apnea
~Poor Diet ~Lack of Exercise ~TIA's
~Prior Stroke ~Excessive Alcohol Use
~Stress and Depression
~Cigarette Smoking

Joseph Kim, MD, Vascular Fellow, Keck Medical Center of USC

Roxanna Todd Hodges is the founder of our Foundation. Roxanna passed away peacefully in 2011. If she would have known the warning signs and the risk factors, things may have been very different for her. When Roxanna suffered 3 major strokes, her understanding of the critical need for Stroke ‘brain attack’ awareness and treatment advances led her to establish the Roxanna Todd Hodges Foundation. Her wish was to inform the public on Stroke Awareness. Today, the RTH Stroke Foundation provides free prevention screenings and seminars to local area hospitals, senior centers, and churches. Her last words spoken were: “Strike out Stroke”
6 Lifestyle Keys

1. Become Super-Choozy About Fat
Cheeseburgers, ice cream, and ribs might taste delicious, but they'll send your cholesterol levels in the wrong direction. It happens because of all the saturated fat you get from them. Cutting back on this type of fat, which comes from meat and full-fat dairy products, can lower your "bad" cholesterol. What's a good goal? There are different views on this. The American Heart Association recommends that people keep calories from saturated fat to no more than 5% to 6% of their total calories. That will help you lower your LDL levels between 11 and 13 points. That means if you normally eat a 2,000-calorie diet, you would have less than 13 grams of saturated fat a day.

"Reducing animal fats is the main thing, like cutting down on fatty beef and pork," says Karen Aspry, MD, a cardiologist with the Cardiovascular Institute at Rhode Island Hospital. "But you'll also want to eat less dairy fat, which means less cheese, butter, and ice cream." You don't need to remove all fat from your diet. If you did, it could backfire.

"In studies, people who eat some healthy fats often have lower cholesterol than those who follow a strict nonfat diet," Aspry says. "Plus healthy fats like the kind in olive oil and nuts boost your HDL levels and lower triglycerides." The key is making sure you choose unsaturated fats whenever possible.

Should you cut out all animal products and go vegetarian or vegan? That's a personal call. It can be a great choice, but then again, potato chips and cheese puffs are vegetarian. You want top quality in your diet, whether you decide that that includes limited amounts of meat or not. Your doctor or a nutritionist can help you decide what's best for you.

2. Break Up With This Fat for Good
You need to get artificial trans fats out of your diet -- permanently. This isn't one of those, "It's good for you; no wait, it's bad for you" wishy-washy scenarios. The information is too solid to ignore.

Not only do they raise your LDL, they also lower your good HDL cholesterol at the same time. Lots of fried foods like doughnuts and packaged food like cookies and crackers have trans fats, so make sure to check the label before you eat. And even if the package claims there are zero trans fats in the food, double-check that there's no "partially hydrogenated oil" in the ingredient list. Something can claim to be trans-fat-free if there's less than 0.5 grams per serving.

3. Block It From Your Blood
That's what soluble fiber does. Beans, barley, oatmeal, psyllium seeds, and brussels sprouts are just a few of the foods that have it. All plants have fiber. The "insoluble" kind passes through your gut like in your gut and helps your body get rid of cholesterol. According to the National Institutes of Health, you can expect about a 5% drop in your bad cholesterol if you add 5-10 more grams of fiber a day. Bump that up to 10-25 extra grams a day and you'll improve your numbers even more. Remember, just about everyone needs to eat more fiber, and plant foods are the best source.

To Better Cholesterol

With exercise, that is. It can improve your cholesterol levels, but you need to do it daily. "The effects of exercise on your cholesterol only lasts about 24 hours or so," Aspry says. "So it's not good enough to head to the gym twice a week and be sedentary the rest of the time."

A better plan: Do something active every day for 30 minutes. "Even a walk around your neighborhood counts as long as you do it regularly," Aspry says. "Plus, if all that moving helps you lose even 5% of your body weight, you'll see another big impact on your cholesterol levels."

5. Ramp It Up
You already know you need to be active. And you're on it. So now, take it a step further. On some days, make your cardio a little tougher than normal. Although any activity is better than none, it pays to push yourself sometimes. A good plan: Three or four days a week, do 40 minutes of cardio where you are working out at a higher intensity. "If you're already active, you can do the same workouts you've been doing, just do them more vigorously," says Robert H. Eckel, MD, director of the Lipic Clinic at University of Colorado. For instance, if you usually walk, add in some spurts of jogging or faster walking. If you're already a runner, mix in sprint intervals.

6. Give Your Job Stress the Pink Slip
If your work gets to you, you owe it to yourself to make some changes. Research shows that people who feel stressed out about their job have higher levels of "bad" (LDL) cholesterol and lower levels of the "good" kind (HDL). While some jobs are naturally stressful, it's important to do what you can to limit how burnt out you feel.

Some ideas:
— Schedule short breaks into your day. A minute here, a quick walk there.
— Use all of your vacation time this year, even if you just stay at home.
— Ask your boss to prioritize your workload so you spend your time and energy wisely.

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To Better Cholesterol

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Cholesterol

What is blood cholesterol?

Cholesterol is one of the fats in your blood. Your body uses it to make cell membranes, vitamin D and hormones. There are two main types of cholesterol:

- **Low-density lipoprotein (LDL)** cholesterol is often called the bad cholesterol because high levels in the blood promote the buildup of plaque in the artery walls.

- **High-density lipoprotein (HDL)** cholesterol is called the good cholesterol because it helps carry LDL cholesterol away from the artery walls.

**Triglycerides** are not a type of cholesterol. However, they are a type of fat that is found in the blood. High triglycerides are associated with excess weight, excess alcohol consumption and diabetes. Your triglyceride level is usually measured at the same time as your blood cholesterol.

How does cholesterol affect heart disease and stroke?

High blood cholesterol is a major risk factor for heart disease and stroke. By lowering your cholesterol, you can dramatically reduce your risk of heart disease and stroke. High cholesterol can lead to a buildup of plaque in the artery walls, narrowing your arteries, a condition called atherosclerosis. It can make it more difficult for blood to flow through your heart and body, putting you at increased risk of circulatory problems, heart disease and stroke.