



## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

### FITNESS FOCUS

#### Exercise Decreases Risk

There is evidence that inactivity is a risk factor for stroke and that exercise can decrease stroke risk. High blood pressure is the most significant modifiable risk factor for stroke. Certain types of exercise can lower stroke risk by its effects on blood pressure.

Aerobic exercise - which uses large muscle groups continuously and rhythmically, such as walking and cycling - is the best type of exercise to lower blood pressure. Try to do at least 150 minutes (2.5 hours) per week of moderate-to vigorous-intensity exercise, such as brisk walking.

According to the Harvard Health article [HERE](#), "Over half a million Americans will suffer from a stroke this year. In a recent review of 18 studies involving exercise and the risk of stroke, researchers found participants who were moderately active had a 20% lower risk of stroke than low-active participants. Moreover, highly active individuals had a 27% lower risk of stroke compared to low-active participants. This suggests the more you exercise the better it is for you."

The protective effect of aerobic exercise is apparent for both types of strokes - those caused by an interruption of blood flow to the brain (ischemic) and those caused by a ruptured blood vessel in the brain (hemorrhagic). Exercise reduces the risk of stroke by lowering blood pressure (a major cause of strokes), as well as by improving blood vessel functioning.

307HEALTH  
250 N. EVARTS STREET  
POWELL, WY 82435  
307HEALTH.ORG

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### HEALTH TIP



#### TREATING SEASONAL ALLERGIES – MEDICATIONS CAN HELP

Seasonal allergies, commonly referred to as "hay fever", can be a minor nuisance for some but near debilitating for others. Fortunately, we have great medications that - if used CONSISTENTLY - can be quite effective in controlling the itchy eyes, sneezes, nasal congestion, and even that morning hacking and coughing. The following describes a good medication approach to tackling those allergy symptoms.

Mild Symptoms Over Several Days to a Week - A trial course of a once-a-day antihistamine like Claritin (loratadine), Allegra (fexofenadine), or Zyrtec (cetirizine) should do the trick.

Moderate to Severe Symptoms Every Day - A trial course of a nasal steroid like Flonase (fluticasone) or Nasonex (mometasone) is the gold-standard treatment...with several caveats. First, maximal effect may take up to several weeks of use for people with more severe symptoms while as-needed use can be effective for mild to moderate symptoms. Second, correct application is important. Once the applicator is positioned INSIDE of the nostril, direct the spray outwards toward the sinuses - not inward toward the septum/cartilage of the nose as this can lead to bloody noses.

Itchy Eyes – Rather than eye products that state "red out", we recommend allergy eye drops that contain antihistamines like ketotifen or pheniramine.

If these options are not allowing you to get outside as often as you would like, then contact your doctor to discuss ways to optimize your treatment options. (dwb)



### DOCTOR'S NOTE

#### CONTROL THE CONTROLLABLES TO DECREASE STROKE RISK

By Mike Tracy, M.D.

Stroke risk includes some risk factors we can control, and some that we cannot. For example, we cannot control our age or our genetic makeup. However, there are many things within our control that can decrease the risk of stroke. Here are the major controllable stroke risk factors:

- **Blood pressure.** High blood pressure is the single biggest risk factor for stroke in men and women. Maintain a healthy target blood pressure.
- **Cigarette smoking.** Don't. Or quit. Smoking cessation greatly reduces stroke risk.
- **Weight.** Being overweight raises stroke risk and it also contributes to other stroke risks such as high blood pressure and diabetes. Maintain a healthy weight.
- **Blood sugar.** High blood sugar and poorly controlled diabetes greatly increase stroke risk.
- **Alcohol intake.** More than two alcoholic drinks per day increases stroke risk significantly. Occasional binge drinking is also a risk factor for stroke.
- **Physical Activity.** Moderate aerobic exercise (150 minutes a week of brisk walking) or vigorous activity (75 minutes a week of running) will decrease stroke risk.
- **Atrial fibrillation.** Persons identified to have atrial fibrillation should adhere to a physician-prescribed blood thinner medication to significantly decrease their risk of stroke.
- **Sleep.** Get good sleep. Poor sleep hygiene increases risk of stroke and many stroke risk factors. People who do not get enough sleep have a higher risk of obesity, high blood pressure, heart attack, diabetes and depression.

Read these two article for more information about stroke risk reduction ...

- [MAYO CLINIC: Strategies To Prevent Heart Disease](#) and
- [HARVARD HEALTH: 7 Things You Can Do To Prevent A Stroke](#)

**BETTER ACCESS = BETTER CARE.**

**PRACTICE NEWS**

**DR. BARTHOLOMEW TAKES NATIONAL POSITION WITH CMDA**

307Health family physician, Dr. Dean Bartholomew, has accepted the position as Chair of the Family Medicine Section of the Christian Medical and Dental Association (CMDA). The Family Medicine Section (FMS) represents nearly 2,000 family medicine providers across the United States. Dr. Bartholomew assumed the role of FMS Chair in December 2020.

Dr. Bartholomew states his focus as Section Chair will be to protect the Hippocratic practice of medicine including the tenets of "first due no harm" which include the recognition of the sanctity of life from conception to natural death.

Founded in 1931, this professional national medical association is based in Bristol, Tennessee and reports over 19,000 members as of 2018. To learn more about the CMDA, visit their website [HERE](#).

**FREE F.A.S.T. INFOGRAPHIC CARDS #RelentlessTogether**

In recognition of Stroke Awareness month, 307Health is offering our members a free FAST infographic card to keep in places you frequent to help remind you of the importance of Stroke responsiveness (see related article in the Member Services Focus column). Explore the American Stroke Association webpage [HERE](#), read the article below, and then stop by the 307Health clinic to pick-up your free info card.

**307HEALTH CONTINUES TO MEET A COMMUNITY NEED**

Last month we mentioned how direct primary care is like a fixed rock in the sandstorm of healthcare change. Why use the stable image of a rock? We believe a fixed monthly member fee in exchange for access to a doctor who knows his/her patients over time and health conditions allows patients to get care when they need care from a known and trusted provider. Over the past three years, 307Health has been at capacity – an indication we have found a niche and meet a community need.



**MEMBER SERVICES FOCUS**

**MAY IS STROKE AWARENESS MONTH #RelentlessTogether**

By the American Stroke Association

**F.A.S.T. is how we come together to end stroke®**

Learn the stroke warnings signs

**F**- Face Drooping

**A**- Arm Weakness

**S** - Speech Difficulty

**T** - Time to call 911

• **Every 40 seconds, someone in the U.S. has a stroke.**

It could happen on your street, in your workplace, at a store where you shop — anywhere. Your readiness to spot the stroke warning signs and call 911 could save a life or make the difference between a full recovery and long-term disability. That's why it's so important to learn the stroke warning signs and urge everyone you know to do the same.

• **The faster stroke is treated, the more likely the patient is to recover.**

In fact, stroke patients who are treated with the clot-busting drug IV r-tPA Alteplase within 90 minutes of their first symptoms were almost three times more likely to recover with little or no disability. In some cases, a procedure to remove the clot causing the stroke is also recommended. Ninety-one percent of stroke patients who were treated with a stent retriever within 150 minutes of first symptoms recovered with little or no disability.

• **The thing to remember is that stroke is largely treatable.** It's a matter of getting the right treatment, right away.

**F.A.S.T. is how we come together to end stroke®**

#RelentlessTogether

**COVID INFORMATION  
And RESOURCES**

**PARK COUNTY VACCINE STATS\***

as of April 26, 2021

9,966 = 1<sup>st</sup> Doses Administered

8,638 = 2<sup>nd</sup> Doses Administered

**Vaccination Rate as a % of Park County Population**

- All Persons = 28.41%
- Adults 18+ = 35.55 %
- Adults 65+ = 56.39%

\*Source: Wyoming Dept of Health

**COVID-19 VARIANTS UPDATE**

Park County Health Officer

04/22/2021 - Facebook Post Reprint

**B.1.526** - The COVID-19 variant B.1.526 (originating in New York) was detected in Park County today. This is categorized as a variant of interest by the CDC and is a minor variant. It is probable that we have had variants in Park County before this, but this is the 1st one detected in Park County and was sequenced by the Wyoming State Health Department Laboratory. This is not a major cause for concern.

Visit [HERE](#) for more information about "Variants of Concern".

**FREE COVID TESTING**

Wyoming offers free at-home COVID-19 testing through a company called Vault Health. These tests are available to Wyoming residents at no cost; insurance is not necessary.

This saliva-based test does not require a nasal swab. The test uses high-quality laboratory technology for a high level of effectiveness. The sample collection process is performed under the supervision of a Vault healthcare provider through an online, video-based telehealth visit.

Test results typically return from the laboratory within 48 hours from when samples are received.

Visit [HERE](#) to learn more about Wyoming's FREE at-home testing and to order a home test kit.