Data Entry Wrap-up by March 31st

The Tennessee Stroke Registry is requesting that all stroke data for 2015 be entered into Get With the Guidelines/Quintiles by March 31, 2016. Data analysis for the 2015 Tennessee Stroke Registry report will begin in April to ensure that the report can be released by mid-June. This date will also fall in line with the deadline for data submission for American Heart Association's Get With the Guidelines awards to be processed on April 1st.

TSR Map Available through ArcGIS Online

An interactive map of certified stroke centers and their 30-, 60-, and 90–minute service areas has been added to the ArcGIS Online map gallery. This map can be regularly updated as new stroke centers are designated by American Heart Association and the Joint Commission. The map can be accessed by searching “stroke” in the map gallery on the ArcGIS website (arcgis.com) or through the following link: http://arcg.is/1U5Myaw

U.T. Medical Center to Host Stroke Symposium

The University of Tennessee Medical Center’s Brain and Spine Institute will host a continuing education and professional development stroke symposium on May 3. The Eighth Annual Stroke Symposium: Providing Care Across the Continuum will be held at the University of Tennessee Conference Center in Knoxville. The course will focus on the follow objectives:

- Review role of advanced practice nurses in improving stroke patient outcomes
- Review neurosurgical management of subarachnoid hemorrhage
- Discuss neuro critical care of patient undergoing decompressive hemicraniectomy
- Review neuro critical care of patient experience hemorrhagic stroke
- Review updated guidelines for endovascular management of stroke
- Review role of stroke coordinator
- Review and discuss strategies for addressing stroke mimics and chameleons
- Discuss development of regional stroke systems of care

This conference is open to physicians, nurses, physical therapists, and other healthcare professionals. For more information and details on how to register, visit the website at http://gsm.utmck.edu/cme/courses/2016/stroke/main.cfm.
When we think of a stroke, we often think of older people. However, most people don’t realize that strokes can occur at any age, even in younger adults.

An estimated 10–15 percent of the roughly 795,000 yearly stroke victims in the United States are younger than 45. It also appears that the percentage of younger adults experiencing strokes each year is increasing. Thus, it is important for this age group to understand common causes and symptoms of stroke, and what to do if a stroke occurs.

Risk factors for stroke at any age include smoking, diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity and high cholesterol. However, many young adults who experience stroke do not necessarily have these risk factors. Causes of strokes in young people not involving common risk factors include drug use, structural problems of the heart and injuries to blood vessels in the neck.

Drug use is a leading cause of stroke in young adults. For instance, cocaine and methamphetamine constrict blood vessels, which can lead to a stroke by decreasing blood flow to the brain. IV drug use, such as heroin, can lead to an infection of the heart valves called endocarditis. The infectious debris on heart valves may then break free and obstruct blood vessels in the brain, resulting in a stroke.

Structural problems of the heart can also lead to strokes in young people. These problems vary, and many people may not realize that they have a structural problem until they suffer a stroke as a consequence of the defect.

Another cause of stroke in young people is a dissection, which is a tear in the innermost layer of a blood vessel in the neck. The inner layer of blood vessels can tear if a person experiences injuries or sudden turning of the neck. Dissections can be caused by major physical traumas such as car accidents, as well as routine motions such as physical exercise.

Young adult females should be aware that both pregnancy and the use of oral contraceptives may increase the risk of stroke by making blood in some people more likely to form blood clots. Fortunately, this circumstance is uncommon.

It is important to know how to spot a stroke quickly, so that the victim can seek immediate medical attention. The American Heart Association has defined a simple acronym for spotting a stroke – F-A-S-T, which stands for Face – Arm – Speech – Time. If you or someone around you is displaying a drooping face, weak or tingling arm or difficulty speaking, then it is time to call 9-1-1.

Stroke victims must receive immediate medical care in order to maximize recovery. Strokes caught within four and a half hours of first symptoms can be treated with a medication, called tissue plasminogen activator, or tPA. Strokes not caught within that time period can sometimes still be treated with interventional radiology. Knowing how to quickly spot a stroke is key to helping younger people who may experience a stroke.

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*This article was adapted from the Lexington Herald Leader and can be accessed online at http://www.kentucky.com/living/health-and-medicine/article62822802.html

Contact Information

For more information about the Tennessee Stroke Registry and how to participate, contact Megan Quinn, TSR manager, or Casey Morrell, TSR graduate assistant. Email (preferred): strokeregistry@etsu.edu or zclm74@goldmail.etsu.edu

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We look forward to working with you to improve stroke care in Tennessee.