

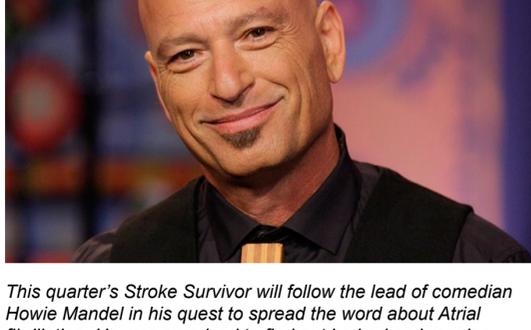
Stroke SURVIVOR

Living and thriving in a post-stroke world

The Newsletter of Valley Medical Center's Neuroscience Institute's Stroke Center

This issue brings awareness to the connection between Afib and stroke, including symptoms of Afib which people should share with their doctors. We explain speech difficulties following stroke in more depth so you know what exactly to listen for. We're also sharing more information about eating a healthy Mediterranean diet and ideas for healthy activities like a community walk or dance class.

What's the Connection between Afib and Stroke? Comedian Howie Mandel wants You to Know



This quarter's Stroke Survivor will follow the lead of comedian Howie Mandel in his quest to spread the word about Atrial fibrillation. He was surprised to find out he had an irregular heart beat that could kill him even though he felt just fine. [Read Howie's interview.](#)

How does a stroke occur with Afib?

One of the most common and deadly risk factors for stroke is Atrial fibrillation. Commonly called "Afib," it's an uneven heart beat which is often present without symptoms or immediate harm. When someone is in Afib, blood doesn't push through to the top chambers of the heart very well—as blood pools, often a clot will form. That clot can float out of the heart and up into the vessels of the brain, causing a stroke.

Eye-opening Facts about Afib and Stroke

- It is estimated that 3 million people in the US have Afib
- An estimated 15% of strokes result from untreated Afib
- Afib dramatically increases the risk of stroke—approximately five times more likely to have a stroke if you have Afib than the general population
- Afib-related strokes are more deadly—more than 70% of Afib patients who have strokes will die as a result
- An estimated one-third of Americans who have Afib are still undiagnosed
- Afib can occur at any age, but is more common as you grow older
- About 5% of people 65 years+ have Afib, rising to 10% people over age 80
- Afib is more common in those with high blood pressure, heart disease or lung disease
- Sometimes a person will have Afib and then have a normal, even heartbeat—it's possible to go in and out of Afib without ever knowing you are in danger

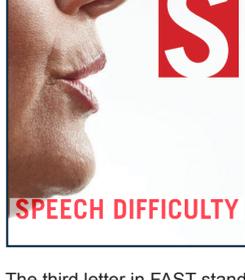
How do you know you have Afib?

You might notice an irregular rhythm, particularly if your heart beats very fast. You might feel fluttering or pounding in the chest. Or even dizziness or light-headedness. If you experience any of these, you should tell your doctor who can do further testing.

More information about stroke and atrial fibrillation:

[Stroke.org resources](#) | [Stroke Smart](#)

FAST: Face, Arms, Speech, Time to Call 911—What Exactly does Speech Difficulty Mean?



The third letter in FAST stands for speech difficulties. But it isn't always easy to understand what that means. There are two general areas of speech difficulties that show in many different ways.

Two things you need to know about speech difficulties that surface in stroke

The first is called **dysarthria**. It is a result of nerves and muscles not moving lips, tongue or other areas of mouth and neck correctly. Speech will then sound slurred, garbled or slow or very quiet.

The second main area of speech difficulty is called **aphasia**. This is a thinking problem when the part of the brain that understands language is affected.

Expressive aphasia is when people have trouble expressing words. Sometimes that is searching for a word or words, or not remembering nouns. It can be very frustrating which in turn may make speaking more difficult.

Receptive aphasia is when people can't understand the words that are being said to them. Sometimes they aren't even aware that they don't understand language. This can be jumbled together without any connection, often called "word salad." It can also show up as responding to questions and conversations with replies which do not make sense.

Though a stroke can cause different speaking difficulties, they all can be assisted by speech therapy in the hospital, in rehab and in clinic rehab.

March 2016

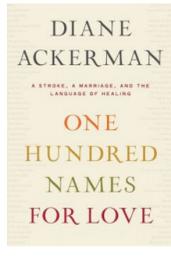


RESOURCES

Book Corner—Readings that Add to the Journey of Recovery

One Hundred Names for Love: a Stroke, a Marriage, and the Language of Healing

This issue's book selection is from the caregiver's point of view. Diane Ackerman and her husband, Paul West, were prolific writers of novels, non-fiction books and essays. They worked side-by-side in a world filled with the joy of words. Then, after hospitalization for kidney stones and staph infections, Paul had a devastating stroke which affected his ability to understand and express language. Love of words was the glue in their marriage; was responsible for their income and in many ways, defined each of them as humans to each other and themselves.



The book tells the story of their recovery together: Not only of Paul's long road to personal recovery and re-discovery of language, but also for his wife who became his caregiver, as his illness affected every part of her life. As with other writing from Ms. Ackerman, the book is beautifully written, brave and effective. The book demonstrates how stroke affects more than the patient and how love really does overcome many seemingly insurmountable challenges.

[Find at your King County library](#)

SEMINARS AND EVENTS

Tango—it's About the Connection!



The Stroke Center is launching a new program for thriving in a post-stroke world. Gabriela Condrea is a teacher, author and believer in Tango Mobility Therapy. Her mission is to harness the power of gentle tango and collaborative movement to maintain and improve neuroplasticity. We are looking for six couples to trial a 4-week course of Neuro-Tango classes, held once a week in the afternoon.

Requirements for Neuro-Tango:

- If you are interested in trying Neuro-Tango and or other dances
- You are able to walk—it doesn't matter how well or how far!
- Have a partner, spouse, friend or family member who will take it with you

Then email your interest to StrokeCenter@valleymed.org

[Find out more about Tango Is About the Connection.](#)

[Learn about Instructor Gabriela Condrea.](#)

Join Us for Stroke Club 2016



What's Stroke Club? It's a monthly support group and potluck for stroke survivors and their family. The Valley Stroke Club (the stroke support group) is now available to you in the evening. Stroke Club is for survivors and their spouses and friends to come together for support and to learn from each other.

Stroke Club meets every second Tuesday evening of the month, 6:30 - 8 PM at Valley Medical Center's Medical Arts Center building, 4033 Talbot Road South, 1st floor, Conference Room C.

The March 8 Stroke Club will be ongoing recovery and lifelong learning.

For more information or questions, email strokecenter@valleymed.org.

FREE Stroke Center Classes for the Community

CHAIR YOGA AND TAI CHI MASH-UP BALANCE & EXERCISE CLASS

Through March 17, 2016
Thursdays, 1 PM – 1:45 PM

Medical Arts Center, Room C
Physical activity is key to living well—not just to survive, but to thrive! Join us for the Chair Yoga and Tai Chi Mash-up Balance & Exercise class for post-stroke stretching; balance improvement and general physical activity for stroke survivors and their partners.

This class is limited to 16 people. The class is FREE, but registration is required on a first come, first served basis.

[Register for each class session you would like to attend](#)

For questions, please email strokecenter@valleymed.org

Additional Upcoming Events

SAFE & SECURE ONLINE

Thursday, March 24, 6 – 7 PM

Medical Arts Center Auditorium
Sara Perrott, CISSP, GCIH

[Learn more or register to attend](#)

GLOW 5K RUN/WALK AT THE LANDING

Sunday, April 17, 9:20 AM

Get \$5 off registration with promo code: VALLEYMED5

Come on out and show your 12th Man and Woman spirit at the 2016 Seahawks 12K Run/GLOW 5K Run/Walk at The Landing—it's sure to provide a morning of fun for the whole family. The GLOW 5K Run/Walk tours The Landing and surrounding Renton neighborhoods. A Half-Mile Kids Run will be completely contained within The Landing. To get the event t-shirt, and support the fundraising effort for A Better Seattle, register for the event. Or you can run/walk in the 5K for FREE by just showing up.

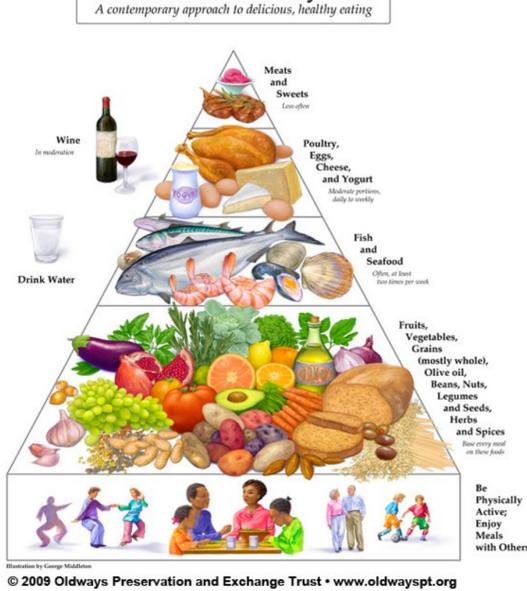
[Learn more or register](#)

▶ [STROKE CENTER HOME PAGE](#)

NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

More Great Info on the Nutritious & Healthy Mediterranean Diet

In a [previous issue](#), the Stroke Survivor explored the nutritious benefits of the Mediterranean diet. If you're interested in another resource for Mediterranean diet tips, recipes and ongoing scientific research, check out the Mediterranean Foods Alliance through the [Oldways Health through Heritage website](#).



Eight tips for eating Mediterranean

1. Eat lots of vegetables (salads, soups, stirfries, on pizza)
2. Change the way you think about meat (smaller amounts, less often)
3. Enjoy some dairy products (yogurt, small amounts of tasty cheese)
4. Seafood twice a week (tuna, herring, salmon, mussels, oysters, clams)
5. Cook a vegetarian meal one night a week (meatless Mondays, fresh Fridays)
6. Use good fats (olive oil, nuts, seeds, avocados)
7. Switch to whole grains (bulgur, barley, farro, brown rice)
8. For dessert, eat fresh fruit (any fruit, any way)

RESEARCH NEWS / STROKE RESEARCH

Research Trial: Stroke Survivors, Be a Part of Developing New Treatments

Valley is assisting the University of Washington Vascular Imaging Lab in enrolling volunteers in a study to determine whether MRI can identify arterial plaques which are a high risk factor for stroke.

You might be eligible to participate in this study if you:

- Have recently had an ischemic stroke
- Are willing to travel to UW Medicine South Lake Union in Seattle
- Are able to tolerate a MRI with contrast
- Are interested in participating in new treatments for stroke!

For more information, please contact the Research Coordinator Kristi Pimentel at kristidb@uw.edu.

Valley Achieves Highest AHA Distinction for Stroke Care



Valley Medical Center is nationally recognized for achievement in stroke treatment, receiving the American Heart Association and American Stroke Association's 2015 Get with the Guidelines Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award. The award recognizes VMC's commitment and success in implementing excellent care for stroke patients, according to evidence-based guidelines. In addition to the Get With The Guidelines-Stroke award, VMC has also been recognized as a recipient of the association's Target: Stroke Honor Roll Elite Plus, for improving stroke care. This Honor Roll designation is the AHA/ASA's highest distinction awarded for Valley's achievement in delivering tissue plasminogen activator, or tPA, within 60 minutes of arriving at the hospital (known as 'door-to-needle' time) to at least 75 percent of the hospital's eligible ischemic stroke patients AND door-to-needle time to within 45 minutes in 50 percent of the hospital's eligible ischemic stroke patients.

