

## Stroke Dictionary

### A

**Agnosia-** the inability to recognize an object despite having vision, hearing, touch, and language functions intact

**Anoxia-** when there is no oxygen being delivered to an area of the body, which can result in damage to the area, such as a part of the brain

**Aphasia-** difficulty speaking or understanding what is said, putting words into sentences, or reading and writing sentences

**Apoplexy-** another term for a cerebral stroke

**Aneurysm-** "ballooning" or stretching of an artery due to a weak or thin spot of an artery wall

**Anticoagulants-** medications used to prevent blood clots

**Apraxia-** the inability to perform familiar movements even without paralysis or a lack of sensory functions

**Arrhythmia-** Irregular heartbeat

**Artery** blood vessel carrying blood from the heart to the tissues

**Atherosclerosis-** Disease in which plaque builds up inside of the arteries, narrowing the blood flow to the brain and increasing the risk of stroke

**Atrial Fibrillation-** the most common type of irregular heart beat that can lead to a formation of blood clots that can trigger a stroke

### B

**Basilar Artery-** the artery that supplies oxygen to the cerebellum, brain stem, and back of the brain

**Blood-Brain Barrier-** a network of cells that protects the brain from harmful substances

**Blood Coagulation-** a process in which blood forms a blood clot

**Brain Stem-** the part of the brain that is responsible for life-sustaining functions such as breathing, blood pressure, and heart rate

**Brain Stem Stroke-** a type of stroke that affects the brain stem

**Broca Area-** the part of the brain that controls speech

### C

**Carotid Artery-** arteries located on both sides of the neck, which supply blood to the front of the brain

**Carotid Endarterectomy-** surgery performed to remove fatty deposits from the carotid artery

**Central Stroke Pain-** a chronic post-stroke pain syndrome that occurs in the same part of the body affected by the stroke

**Cerebellum-** part of the brain that is responsible for voluntary movements, and posture, balance, coordination

**Cerebrovascular disease-** group of conditions that affect the blood vessels and blood supply to the brain

**Cerebral infarction-** death of part of the brain from a lack of oxygen-carrying blood

**Cerebrum-** composed of the right and left hemispheres of the brain, the cerebrum controls movement, temperature, touch, vision, hearing, judgement, coordination, and more

**Cholesterol-** a waxy substance produced by the liver. Excess of cholesterol can lead to a buildup of plaque in arteries and increase the risk of stroke

**Complete Blood Count-** a group of tests that evaluates the cells that circulate in blood

**Computed Tomography Scan (CT)-** a series of cross sectional scans of the brain that can identify brain injury

**Cognitive impairment-** difficulty with thinking abilities such as problem solving and paying attention

**Clipping-** surgical procedure for treatment of aneurysms

## **D**

**Diabetes-** a group of diseases that result in too much sugar in the blood

**Dissection-** a tear in the inside wall of a blood vessel that can block blood flow, causing a stroke

**Deep Vein Thrombosis-** when a blood clot forms in a vein deep in the body such as in a leg

**Dysarthria-** weakness in the muscles that control the mouth, lips, tongue, or breathing.

Characterized by slurred speech

**Dysphagia-** the inability to safely swallow

## **E**

**Embolus-** a blood clot or fatty material that travels in the blood stream and blocks a blood vessel

**Embolic Stroke-** a stroke caused by an embolus to the brain

**Endarterectomy-** the surgical removal of plaque from an artery

**Epilepsy-** a condition where someone has repeated seizures. Stroke is one of the many conditions that may lead to epilepsy

**Edema-** swelling

**Echocardiogram-** a test used to check for an irregular heartbeat, which is a risk factor for stroke

**Emotionalism-** A common post-stroke symptom. This means that someone will experience very strong and sudden emotional reactions

**Enteral feeding-** feeding through a tube connected to a person's stomach. A patient may require this type of feeding if their stroke affected their ability to swallow

## **F**

**FAST Test-** a three step test that can be used to identify if someone is having a stroke

F- facial weakness/drooping

A- arm weakness

S- speech problems

T- time to call 911

**Fatigue-** a common symptom after a stroke in which you feel very tired

## **H**

**Hemiparesis-** weakness on one half of the body.

**Hemiplegia-** complete paralysis on one side of the body

**Hemorrhagic stroke-** sudden bleeding into or around the brain. Also known as a brain bleed

**Hyperlipidemia (High Cholesterol)-** a high concentration of fats in the blood, including high cholesterol, which can lead to stroke

**Hypertension-** high blood pressure

**Hypoxia-** decreased oxygen delivery to tissues

**Hydrocephalus-** the buildup of fluid in cavities deep within the brain.

## **I**

**Infarction-** a sudden loss of blood supply to tissue causing the tissue to die

**Infarct-** an area of tissue that is dead due to ischemia

**Ischemia-** a lack of blood flow to tissues in the body

**Ischemic Stroke-** this type of stroke occurs when blood supply to an area of the brain is blocked.

As a result, the area is oxygen deficient, causing damage to the cells

**Incontinence-** loss of bladder or bowel control

## **L**

**Large Vessel Disease-** abnormalities in large brain arteries

**Lacunar Syndrome-** symptoms resulting from lacunar infarcts

**Lacunar Infarction-** blockage of a small artery deep in the brain resulting in damaged brain tissue

## **M**

**MRA scan-** a special type of MRI scan which produces images of blood vessels (arteries and veins). Dye is injected into the veins which helps to highlight the blood vessels in the brain

**MRI scan-** a scan that takes pictures of the head and brain using magnetic fields and radio waves

**Multi- Infarct Dementia -** long term confusion caused by a series of small strokes

**Migraine-** intense headache that may be accompanied by other symptoms such as nausea and light sensitivity

**Myocardial Infarction-** heart attack

## **N**

**Neuron** name for a nerve cell

**Neuroplasticity-** the potential for the brain to adapt through growth and reorganization. An example of a brain adaptation would be the formation of new neurons.

## **P**

**PEG tube:** a feeding tube inserted into the stomach of patients who are not able to eat normally due to impaired swallowing from stroke

## **Q**

**Quadriplegia-** paralysis or weakness in all four limbs

## **R**

**Rehabilitation-** the process of recovering body and mental functions

## **S**

**Seizure-** sudden and abnormal electrical activity in the brain which can result in loss in consciousness, muscle contractions or weakness

**Stroke-** occurs when the blood supply to part of the brain is suddenly interrupted or when a blood vessel around the brain bursts , resulting in damage to an area of the brain

**Spasticity-** a condition in which increased stiffness in muscles can cause pain or discomfort

**Speech and Language Therapy-** therapy to assist with the ability to understand and articulate words

**Statins-** medication used to reduce cholesterol

**Stenosis-** the narrowing of an artery

## **T**

**Thrombosis-** blockage of a blood vessel due to a clot

**Thalamus-** part of the brain associated with sensations and motor signals

**Transient Ischemic Attack-** A stroke-like event in which an artery that supplies the brain is blocked briefly, but the blood supply is restored before the brain is permanently damaged

**tPA-** treatment for ischemic stroke that is usually given within the first three hours of stroke. This drug dissolves the stroke-causing clot, enabling patients to have a better and more complete recovery.

## **V**

**Vertebral artery-** artery on either side of the neck that supplies blood to the back of the brain

**Vein-** blood vessel which carries blood back to the heart from the body