

STROKE—PREVENTING “BRAIN ATTACKS”

We often stress prevention of accidents, but equally important is stressing the importance of preventing cerebrovascular accidents (CVA) or strokes. Stroke is the 4th leading cause of death in Iowa. Iowa Medicaid spends more money per person on survivors of stroke than on congestive heart failure, cancer, coronary heart disease, diabetes or hypertension.

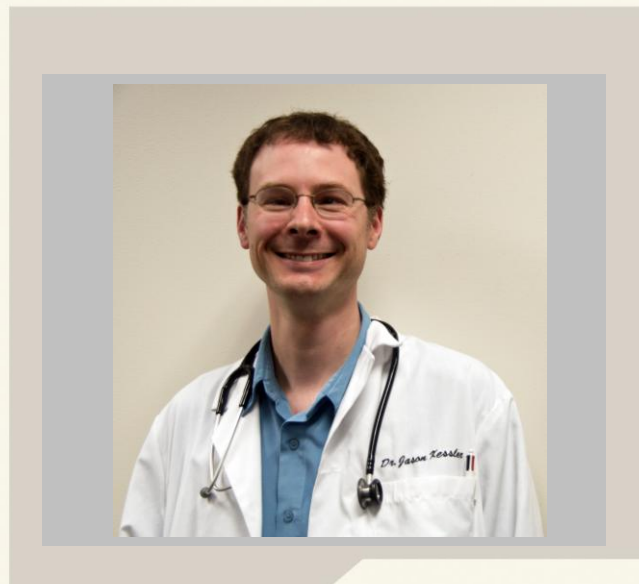
The risk of stroke advances with age, but it is never too early (or too late) to encourage healthy habits that prevent stroke. Smoking is the leading risk factor for all cardiovascular disease. Educate all patients about the benefits of avoiding tobacco and use techniques like Motivational Interviewing (MI) to develop readiness to quit in smokers. Recommend daily physical activity and assess the barriers that may prevent people from getting the activity they need. Recommend everyone to get at least 5 fruit and vegetable servings every day. Work with your patients to aggressively control high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes. Work with overweight patients to improve their weight status.

In a recent survey, just under half of Iowa seniors were aware of all 5 of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC's) warning signs and symptoms for stroke. Teach all of your patients to seek immediate medical attention for sudden confusion or trouble speaking, numbness or weakness of face, arm or leg, sudden vision trouble in one or both eyes, dizziness or trouble walking or severe unexplained headaches. It is essential to call 9-1-1 immediately for treatment that could eliminate long-term disability. Time Lost is Brain Lost.

Thanks for all you do!



Jason Kessler, MD, FAAP, CHBE –
Medical Director, IME/IFMC



For more information:

<http://www.cdc.gov/stroke/>

http://www.idph.state.ia.us/hpcdp/hdsp_home.asp

<http://www.strokeassociation.org/STROKEORG/>



www.ime.state.ia.us