My Hospital
Stroke Coordinator: Jane Smith
(123) 555-1212

Support Groups
Anytown Stroke Survivors Group
When: Every Wednesday at 1PM
Where: Anytown Hospital
Contact: Jane Smith, RN
Phone: (123) 555-1212

Anytown Stroke Caregivers Group
When: Every Tuesday at 10AM
Where: Anytown Hospital
Contact: John Jones, LICSW
Phone: (123) 555-1212

Resources

American Stroke Association
Find a Support Group
http://www.strokeassociation.org/STROKEORG/strokegroup/public/zipFinder.jsp

Life After Stroke—You’re Not Alone
http://www.strokeassociation.org/STROKEORG/

National Stroke Association
Depression
http://www.stroke.org/we-can-help/survivors/stroke-recovery/post-stroke-conditions/emotional/depression

POST-STROKE DEPRESSION
What it is, how to recognize it, and what to do if you suspect it.
What should you do?

The single most important action is to speak with your doctor or healthcare provider!

Make an appointment right away, and be open and honest about feelings or things you are seeing or experiencing. Post-stroke depression is real and can be treated, and your healthcare provider will not judge.

Join a Support Group

While therapies and medication prescribed by your doctor are essential, the ability to connect with others who have had a stroke should not be underestimated.

There is no substitute for the healing power of people. Support groups exist not only for stroke survivors, but for caregivers and families as well. They offer insight that only people intimately connected with a stroke can offer and, often times, are "living proof" of what successful treatment and recovery can look like.

Ask your doctor, nurse, or therapist how you can be involved in your local support group.

What is PSD?

Post-stroke Depression (PSD), is a depression that is a direct result of having a stroke. It is extremely common for people experiencing a stroke to develop some degree of PSD. In fact, it is estimated that one in every three stroke survivors will be affected.

Research suggests there are many factors which contribute to depression after suffering a stroke. Some of these include:

- Loss of independence or the ability to perform basic activities of daily living.
- Physical changes to blood flow in the brain.
- Inability to communicate
- Survivor’s guilt—feeling like one is a drain on society and that others should not have to bear the burden of caring for them.
- Changes in sexual function.

Most importantly...

PSD is normal and can be successfully treated. Left untreated, depression can slow or prevent recovery.

What does PSD look like?

Post-stroke depression will be different for every stroke survivor! However, there are several common symptoms which may suggest you or your loved one is suffering from PSD. Often times people with PSD will experience:

- Changes in mood such as tearfulness, anxiety, shame, anger, or fear.
- Fatigue and loss of motivation towards recovery.
- Inability to initiate or finish activities.
- Thoughts of suicide or wanting to die.
- Feelings of being a burden on family and friends.
- Anorexia or loss of appetite.

Remember...

No one person is the same, and post-stroke depression will present differently for everyone. If you recognize any of the above or see other signs or symptoms developing after a stroke, consider the possibility of PSD.

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