

2014

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REVIEW

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Your Partner in Health

Stroke recovery depends on medical expertise and patient action

Nationally and locally, hospitals and health systems are concerned about offering the best healthcare possible in the most efficient and effective manner. We know that being efficient and basing our services on benchmark protocols make the most of our resources and, most importantly, save lives. One way of assuring that we are offering the highest quality of care is to seek accreditation and certification for the services we provide.

Our recent certification by the Joint Commission as an **Advanced Primary Stroke Center** is a good example. This certification means Port Huron Hospital has been recognized as having state-of-the-art services, staff, and training for treating stroke patients. Following a rigorous onsite review, the Joint Commission approved our stroke treatment protocols. These include advanced imaging capabilities, 24/7 availability of specialized treatments, and staff with unique education and competencies to care for stroke patients.

We're proud of the accreditations, certifications and quality designations we've earned for the high quality of care that we provide throughout the hospital.

Thomas DeFauw, President and Chief Executive Officer

A STROKE CAN BE SUDDEN

When a stroke happens - treatment must start quickly. There's a saying among health providers - *Time is brain* - meaning that the sooner care is received, the more brain cells are saved.

According to Port Huron Hospital Stroke Coordinator Stephanie McLaren, RN, "For every minute you are left untreated you lose 19 million brain neurons. And for every hour you lose, you age your brain by 3.6 years."

That's why stroke is considered a **MEDICAL EMERGENCY** and treatment must begin as soon as possible. Stephanie points to an acronym to help you recognize a stroke:

Act F-A-S-T

- F** Face drooping, especially on one side of the face.
- A** Arm weakness
- S** Slurred speech
- T** Time - call 911 immediately.

"When stroke patients enter the Emergency Center, they are treated as high priority," says Stephanie. "Everything is fast. We have a coordinated a protocol throughout the hospital where staff from different areas quickly and efficiently work

to prevent further damage to our stroke patients."

Patients suffering a stroke receive priority in the hospital's stroke system of care which may include imaging such as CT scan or MRI, administration of the drug TPA (a clot-breaking drug which can save millions of brain cells) and a neurological assessment, which can aid in rehabilitation.

Prevention is vital

To understand prevention, it's helpful to understand the nature of strokes. There are two types:

- **Ischemic stroke:** Artery blocked by a blood clot or plaque/fatty deposits. Approximately 87% of all strokes are ischemic.
- **Hemorrhagic stroke:** Blood vessel in the brain breaks and leaks blood into the brain. This is often caused by a weak vessel due to a clot. Approximately 13% of strokes are hemorrhagic, but hemorrhagic stroke account for 30% of all stroke deaths.

It's essential to proactively maintain a healthy lifestyle and to control conditions that can pre-dispose you to clots, and subsequently a stroke:

- Monitor and manage high blood pressure (hypertension)
- Monitor and manage cholesterol
- Stop smoking
- Control alcohol use
- Monitor and manage diabetes
- Manage diet and weight
- Identify and manage atrial fibrillation (irregular heartbeat) which can increase the chance of a stroke by 500%.

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PORT HURON HOSPITAL PROVIDES COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAMS

The hospital provides comprehensive programs to aid in both prevention and rehabilitation, including the Stroke Survivors Support Group and educational programs offered throughout the year through 55 Plus, Women's Wellness Place and Diabetes Education. For specifics, visit porthuronhospital.org or call HealthAccess at 1-800-228-1484.



For more information, please visit or contact us at:

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1.800.228.1484 or www.porthuronhospital.org