

STROKE HEROES ACT FAST TO RAISE AWARENESS AND SAVE LIVES

Teaching signs and symptoms of stroke spurs quick action to seek emergency care

Public Health Problem

- Almost half of stroke victims die before being hospitalized.
- Stroke is also the leading cause of adult disability in the United States.
- Early treatment can reduce disability and deaths due to stroke but only if people recognize the sometimes-subtle symptoms and seek emergency treatment.

Program

- With funding from the New York State Department of Health, St. Vincent's Hospital Healthy Heart Program educated workers in New York City, Queens, Staten Island and Brooklyn about stroke.
- The Stroke Heroes Act FAST educational program, created by the Massachusetts Department of Health, uses the FAST acronym to teach stroke signs and symptoms.
- FAST stands for **F**ace, **A**rm, **S**peech and **T**ime to call 9-1-1 and its use leads to immediate recognition of a majority of strokes.
- Program participants completed a quiz assessing their knowledge of stroke signs and symptoms before and after the presentations.

Impact

- Participants in the educational program increased their knowledge of stroke signs and symptoms.
- **Two worksites credit the stroke awareness presentation with saving the life of an employee.** Both employees avoided serious injury because the stroke awareness program helped colleagues recognize the urgency of the situation and the need for immediate action.
 - A twenty-four year-old male employee told a colleague he wasn't feeling well. The colleague, having attended the stroke program, recognized the symptoms as stroke-related and persuaded him to seek emergency care.
 - A fifty year- old woman recognized her own symptoms and sought immediate care.
- Feedback indicates that participants will share the important stroke information they learned with co-workers, family and friends, extending the reach of the educational program.

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