Chalk out



What is a stroke?

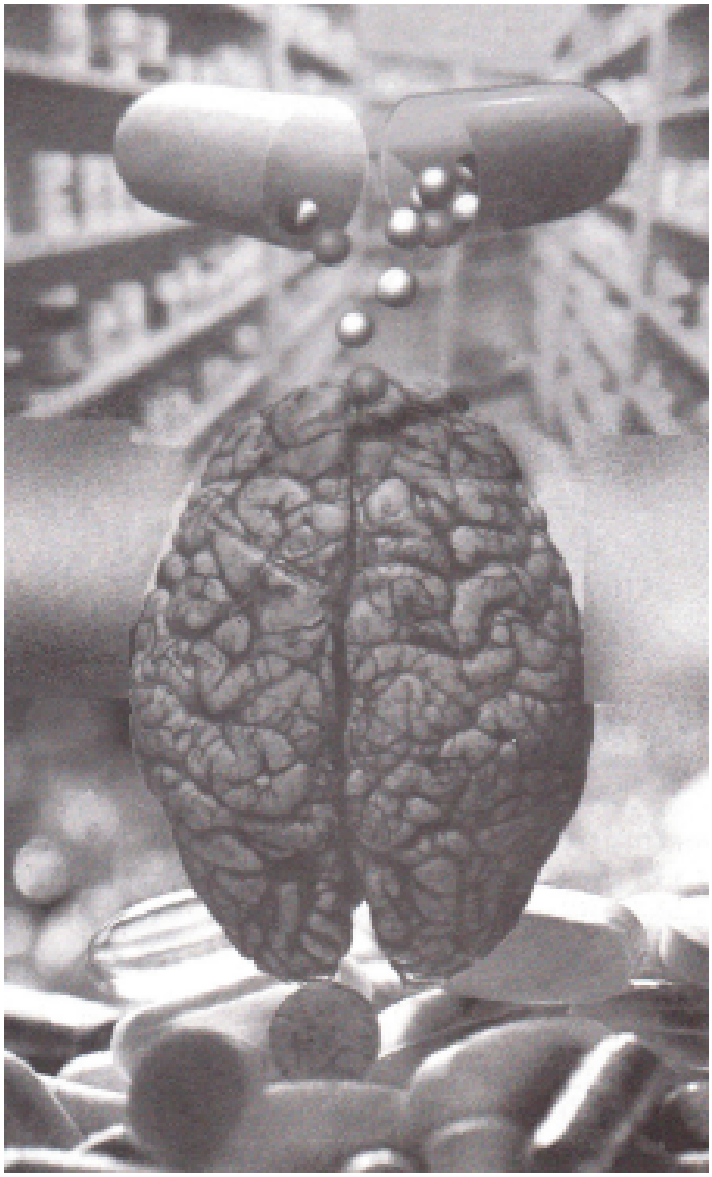
A stroke occurs when the blood flow to the brain is interrupted by blood clotting in a damaged vessel or by a vessel which haemorrhages. Part of the brain is destroyed after a stroke. There is swelling in the surrounding areas which later goes down and some recovery is possible, guided by rehabilitation and care. Depending on which parts of the brain are affected, parts of the mind and body are affected. Paralysis to the limbs, twisting of the face, loss of balance, sight disturbance and loss of bladder and bowel control may result. For those who have had a stroke and for those who care for them, life can change alarmingly and drastically overnight. A stroke can be viewed as a response to a situation which is emotionally overwhelming brought on either by a sudden crisis or some long-running stress such as a difficult domestic situation.

We often tend to neglect our lifestyle due to our pre-occupation with work or other reasons. With the wrong kind of lifestyle anyone can have a stroke, at any age. But by building an all-round picture of your health and well-being, you have many alternatives which can help you reduce your risk of a stroke or increase the chances of a successful recovery. Your ability to avoid or recover from an illness depends on the type of person you are, as well as your lifestyle and your general environment. The first thing is to look for your personality type. There are two basic personality types.

Type A people bottle up their feelings and are highly competitive. They are clock watchers, arrive early for work and constantly set themselves against deadlines. They hate being kept waiting, are impatient, think about other things while talking to you and cannot bear criticism. They constantly ask themselves “What am I achieving?” and not “Am I enjoying myself?”

a healthy lifeplan

by Malkanthi Leitan



Antioxidants that can help

Foods rich in Vitamins A, C and E, zinc, selenium and the B-group vitamins are vital in preventing stroke.

• Vitamin A (betacarotene) is found in yellow and green fruit and vegetables. It helps maintain healthy tissue and helps the body fight infection.

• Vitamin B helps us deal with stress. Seeds, nuts and vegetables are packed with this Vitamin. An adequate intake of fruit, vegetables, whole grains, vegetable

protein like lentils, beans, nuts and seeds should cover this.

• Vitamin C is found in green, red, orange and yellow fruit and vegetables and is necessary for making collagen from which the arteries are formed. It also helps remove cholesterol from the arteries.

• Vitamin E is important as it helps the blood cells transport oxygen and dissolve existing blood clots. Vitamin E is present in green vegetables as well as in olive oil, nuts and wheatgerm.

• Selenium is found in garlic and onions among other things and helps reduce the stickiness of blood.

• Zinc, found in seeds and wheatgerm, promotes tissue growth and mental alertness.

Type B people know how to relax and play, are more laid-back, ease off when tired and can co-operate with others.

Type A people are more susceptible to strokes as their lives are more stressful. Stress can raise the blood pressure thus increasing the risk of stroke. If you think that you belong to Type A then, you need to learn to relax and reduce the stress in your life. Looking after your emotional physical and spiritual well-being reduces the occurrence of a stroke This is especially important if you are at a high risk-if there is a history of arterial disease in your family or if you have coronary heart discase, if you smoke, have high blood pressure or diabetes.

A stress-relieving therapy such as massage, yoga or psychotherapy could put your life into focus.

It is a wellknown fact that good nutrition can help prevent heart disease. Here’s a bit of simple advice where nutrition is concerned. Avoid things beginning with S: sugar, salt, saturated fat and stimulants like alcohol, tea, coffee including decaffeinated coffee, chocolate and cola drinks. These are all associated with an increased risk of arterial disease.

Salt raises the blood pressure in susceptible individuals. Sugar is as sociated with raised blood pressure and increased risk of heart disease and so could be linked to increased risk of stroke. For healthy arteries, eat a diet which is rich in fruit and vegetables, avoid red meat and fried food and cook sparingly with butter or olive

oil. People with arterial problems may benefit from eating oily fish at least once a week and we have a large variety of oily fish to choose from in the market. Oily fish helps lower blood pressure and cholesterol and thins the blood.

Smoking a packet of cigarettes a day increases the risk of a stroke as much as five times. Smoking can also cause blood clotting and so lead to artery damage. The arteries then get congested and are blocked with cholesterol and fat.

A sedentary lifestyle doubles the possibility of heart disease and probably of stroke as well. Swimming, cycling or brisk walking twice a week for 20 minutes is perfect to begin with. You can gradually build up from there. Don’t suddenly launch yourself into a high-impact programme if you are not used to it.