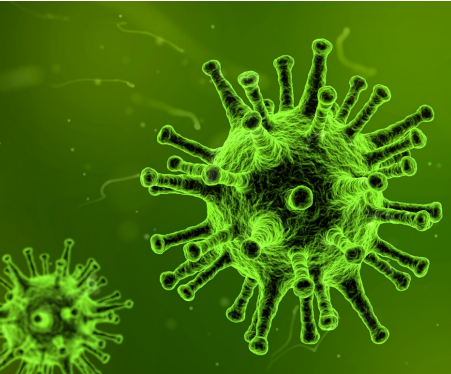




Monthly e-newsletter connecting stroke survivors, caregivers and the community. Our focus is increasing stroke knowledge, providing stroke education, updates on stroke research and treatment and information on local resources.



**During an acute stroke,  
2 million brain cells die  
per minute!**

## COVID-19 KEEPING STROKE PATIENTS AWAY

Stroke centers across the country are seeing a dramatic drop in acute stroke admissions during the COVID 19 crisis, suggesting people may be choosing to stay at home and NOT seek acute stroke care because of fears of being exposed to the coronavirus. Dr. Sean Savitz, Director of the UTHealth Stroke Institute in Houston, is seeing a 30% decrease in stroke admissions over the last 8 weeks at their Memorial Hermann TMC Stroke Center. "We want the Houston community to know we can provide safe acute stroke care at our stroke center in the setting of the COVID-19 outbreak. "If patients feel that it's best for them to stay home and they're in the midst of a stroke, that could lead to far worse consequences."" says Dr. Savitz. [Read Full Interview Here](#)

## COPING WITH COVID-19

by Jennifer B. Hughes

Seems to change every day. We might feel strong one day but scared or stressed the next. Daily changes can make us feel anxious because our brain starts trying to control things that feel scary. Grounding is a great way to deal with this because it helps you come back to the present moment by using your five senses.

A great grounding tool is "54321" where you start by looking around and naming to yourself 5 things you can SEE, then 4 things you can TOUCH, 3 things you can HEAR, 2 things you can SMELL, and 1 thing you can TASTE. Connecting with your senses can instantly bring you to the present moment, taking you away from stressful thoughts!

## KNOW THE SIGNS of STROKE

A stroke, is a brain attack, every second counts. Think FAST to learn stroke warning signs!

F- Ask the person to smile; Does one side droop?

A-Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

S- Ask the person to repeat a simple phrase. Is their speech slurred or strange?

T- If you observe any of these signs, TIME TO CALL 911 immediately!

## KNOW LESS COMMON STROKE SYMPTOMS

- Sudden CONFUSION, trouble speaking or understanding speech
- Sudden TROUBLE SEEING in one or both eyes
- Sudden TROUBLE WALKING, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden SEVERE HEADACHE with no known cause

# STROKE STRIDES

A UTHealth Stroke Institute Monthly Newsletter

## KNOW STROKE | FACTS

Make the stroke call. 9-1-1  
stroke.nih.gov

KNOW  
STROKE

In the United States,  
**40** someone suffers from a stroke  
every 40 seconds.

A stroke-related  
**4** death occurs  
every 4 minutes.

An additional  
**4 million** people will die of stroke by 2030,  
a 21.9% increase in prevalence from 2013.

Source: American Heart Association Statistics Committee and Stroke Statistics Subcommittee. 2019. Heart disease and stroke statistics – 2019 update: a report from the American Heart Association. Circulation. 139:e101-e145.

- Stroke is the 5th cause of death and a leading cause of adult disability in the US.
- Stroke kills twice as many women as breast cancer.
- Stroke is a Brain Attack. It occurs when one of the arteries to the brain is blocked or bursts.
- As a result, part of the brain does not get blood it needs, so brain cells die.
- During acute stroke about 2 million brain cells die per minute.

- IV tPA (tissue plasminogen activator) is a clot busting medication approved for acute stroke treatment.
- IV tPA treatment is time dependent
- IV tPA within 4.5 hours of stroke onset remains the standard of care for most ischemic stroke patients.
- Stroke caused by a clot is called an ischemic stroke, makes up about 85% of strokes in the US.

## Test Your Stroke Knowledge

## The Stroke Network An Online Stroke Support Community

If you are looking for an online support group, go to [strokenetwork.org](http://strokenetwork.org). It is an active group. Everyone in the group has survived a stroke and has great ideas they are willing to share.

## High Blood Pressure = Silent Killer

Blood Pressure (BP) is the pressure of blood pushing against your artery walls. High BP or hypertension is often called the silent killer. You might not have symptoms, but it's a leading risk factor for heart disease & stroke.

Monitoring your BP at home can help you keep it under control. **KNOW YOUR NUMBERS!** Check your BP to see what category it falls into!

[DOWNLOAD BP TRACKER](#)

## Blood Pressure Categories



BLOOD PRESSURE CATEGORY	SYSTOLIC mm Hg (upper number)		DIASTOLIC mm Hg (lower number)
NORMAL	LESS THAN 120	and	LESS THAN 80
ELEVATED	120 – 129	and	LESS THAN 80
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 1	130 – 139	or	80 – 89
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 2	140 OR HIGHER	or	90 OR HIGHER
HYPERTENSIVE CRISIS (consult your doctor immediately)	HIGHER THAN 180	and/or	HIGHER THAN 120

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[heart.org/bplevels](http://heart.org/bplevels)

# STROKE STRIDES

MAY 2020

*A UTHHealth Stroke Institute Monthly Newsletter*

## STROKE RESEARCH

PISCES III is a clinical research study that is evaluating if a study drug, made from stem cells, will help improve function in those who recently suffered an ischemic stroke. You or a loved one may qualify if you are 35-75 years old, had your stroke within the past 23 months, and have limited movement in the arms/legs.

For more information on the trial and eligibility, please contact Dr. Sean Savitz, Director, UTHHealth Institute for Stroke and Cerebrovascular Disease at 713-500-7085 or [Dorothea.M.Parker@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:Dorothea.M.Parker@uth.tmc.edu).

## STROKE SUPPORT GROUPS

West Houston Stroke Warriors is Houston's largest stroke support group with over 120 stroke survivors & caregivers. Meet new friends, enjoy fun activities, or share your story with other stroke survivors.

Meets every Saturday @ 10 am. To join or for further information, contact Wanda Adams at [wanda.adams@hcahealthcare.com](mailto:wanda.adams@hcahealthcare.com) or 281-588-8590.



## STROKE VOLUNTEER STAR



Sandi G. Shaw, BSN, RN, ASC-BC is the Stroke Program Director at Memorial Hermann TMC. Sandi completed her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston. She has over 20 years of clinical experience in acute stroke care and research. Stroke care is not only a profession for Sandi but is also personal. She is the daughter of a two-time stroke survivor and acts as her mother's primary caregiver while maintaining a full-time leadership position and attending graduate school at Texas Woman's University School of Business MBA program.

Sandi is an advocate for patients and the community. For many years, she has participated in countless community outreach programs knowing the impact outreach education has on society. Sandi has co-authored a manuscript regarding her work in the community and looks forward to sharing the results with her colleagues. We are excited to recognize Sandi as May's Stroke Volunteer Star!

**Sandi G. Shaw, BSN,  
RN, ASC-BC**

## SHARE YOUR STROKE STORY

Are you a stroke survivor or caregiver who would like to share your story? Do you have a topic or issue you would like us to discuss? Please email your story or topic to [Giselle.Montes@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:Giselle.M.Montes@uth.tmc.edu), Program Manager, at [Giselle.M.Montes@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:Giselle.M.Montes@uth.tmc.edu) or call 713-500-6028.