What do you need to know?

WHAT IS STROKE/CEREBROVASCULAR ACCIDENT (CVA)?
Stroke refers to a cut off of blood flow to an area of the brain. This can lead to memory loss, loss of muscle control, difficulty with speech and understanding. Depending on the severity of the stroke; some persons recover completely whilst ~2/3 of persons retain some degree of disability.

TYPES OF STROKE:

Ischemic Stroke:
- Blockage of blood vessel carrying blood to the brain by a clot.
- High blood pressure is the most important risk factor in this type of stroke.
- More common type of stroke

Hemorrhagic Stroke:
- Blood vessel leak/rupture; blood leaks into brain increasing the pressure in the brain.
- High blood pressure and aging blood vessels increases risk for this type of stroke.

Transient-ischemic Attack (TIA):
- Blood flow to the brain stops temporarily (mimics stroke symptoms)
- Usually does not cause permanent damage
- Big indicator of possible stroke occurring in the future

STROKE FACTS & YOU:

a. Stroke can occur at any age
b. Recognizing symptoms and addressing them early can give you a better outcome (symptoms of stroke onset: sudden onset of speech problems, difficulty walking, weakness and/or numbness on one side of the body, facial twisting)
c. Stroke is listed under the chronic non-communicable diseases responsible for 60% of deaths in Trinidad and Tobago
d. Causes of Stroke: high blood pressure, smoking, family history, diabetes, high cholesterol, certain medications e.g. birth control pills in women >35 and heart disease to name a few.

Physiotherapy: Getting you back on your feet!
- Exercise: controlled exercise can assist in controlling blood pressure, strengthening muscles, improving balance and mobility. Frequency of exercise is based on how severe the stroke is.
- Improving functional ability: physiotherapists use functional day to day tasks to help you get back to your routine.

Prepared as a public service by the Physiotherapy Association of Trinidad and Tobago
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Notes