

TO YOUR HEALTH

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Music Can Be Healing After a Stroke

By Marcia Feldman, Palliative Care Coordinator

In early September, a newscaster in Oklahoma had the beginnings of a stroke on live TV. Luckily her colleagues recognized the symptoms, jumped into action quickly to intervene and she got help quickly. They noticed her speech was impaired and her ability to read or make sense of the teleprompter was stilted. She described it afterwards as knowing there was something wrong however, with her training that the show must go on, she tried to soldier on through it anyway.

What exactly is a stroke? According to the CDC, *"A stroke, sometimes called a brain attack, occurs when something blocks blood supply to part of the brain or when a blood vessel in the brain bursts. In either case, **parts of the brain become damaged or die.** A stroke can cause lasting brain damage, long-term disability, or even death."*

There is evidence from several studies that music can be a helpful tool in the healing process after a stroke. For example, when there is impairment to one's speech, vocal songs with words can help retrace synapses in the brain that have been jumbled by the stroke.

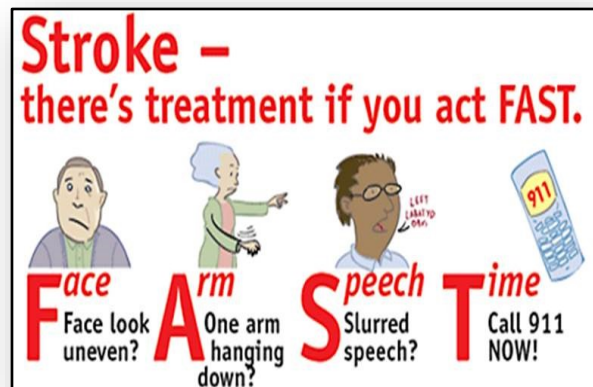
Interestingly enough, singing and speech are controlled by different parts of the brain. So people with aphasia who can't speak a whole sentence can often sing an entire song with the correct words. It is remarkable to witness! That is why, after Congresswoman Gabby Giffords suffered a gunshot wound to the part of her brain that controls speech, her Music Therapy team used a method called, Melodic Intonation Therapy (MIT), to have her sing first as a way to regain her ability to speak. There are Aphasia Choirs popping up around the country for stroke survivors, people with brain injuries or dementia to tap into one of the few means of communication left to them through singing.

An early study showed that *"listening to music for an hour each day improved memory and attention, as well as mood, during the early stages of stroke recovery."* A follow up study showed that *"Listening to music stimulated structural changes in the areas of the brain responsible for verbal memory, language skills and focused attention...and that...vocal music was superior to instrumental music [and] led to memory and language recovery."*

Gottfried Schlaug, MD, PhD and Director of the Music and Neuroimaging Laboratory at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and Harvard Medical School, has published widely about several studies of music and the brain ranging from Aphasia Therapy, Music and Autism, Acute Stroke Studies and several more. His team is working to discover the myriad of ways music listening and music making can be used therapeutically to resolve anomalies in the brain. Stay tuned...

How to recognize signs of a stroke

The FAST acronym is used by the medical community to educate people on catching the common signs of a stroke:



In addition, is the person having sudden or acute changes in their balance or vision? Recognizing the signs and getting help quickly could be crucial for their recovery.

Tackling the Fall

According to the CDC one in four adults over sixty-five report having a fall. Most research conducted on falls has been based indoors. However, Stroll Safe, an innovative program at NYU, has been focusing on outdoor fall prevention. Environmental factors have been identified as a primary reason for falls outside. Lighting, debris, curbs and clutter can trigger a fall. While taking an autumnal walk, be aware of falling leaves and acorns. They can cause you to slip or trip. In addition, over exertion, eyewear, gait speed and alcohol use may increase the risk of a fall.

The National Institute of Health has the following recommendations for outdoor walking:

- Wear appropriate shoes
- Stay alert by not talking on phones
- Identify routes where you can sit and rest
- Walk during day light hours. (The clocks fall back on November 6th)
- Use a sidewalk or path

WELCOME

We would like to introduce our new Nurse Practitioner, Alicia Kleczkowski. She has been a family nurse practitioner since 2012, primarily working in Internal Medicine. She is a native of Massachusetts and is very excited to work with our older population. Alicia will be working in the nursing center.

Open Enrollment

Just an reminder that the Medicare Open Enrollment period is between October 15th to December 7th.

Please make sure you review your insurance plan and Part D component. If you need help, contact Maeve Lobo at the Clinic.

INFLATION REDUCTION ACT

By the Numbers

The Inflation Reduction Act that was passed in August 2022 will impact seniors across the country. Some of the salient features of the Act are :

- Beginning in 2026 the federal government will be able to negotiate some drugs covered by Medicare Part B and Part D. This is a significant change in the law.
- Starting in 2025 Medicare recipients annual out of pocket prescription drug costs will be capped at \$2000.
- By 2023 drug companies will be required to pay Medicare a rebate if their prices rise faster than the rate of Inflation.
- Cost sharing for insulin will be capped to \$35 a month for individuals with Medicare. This will begin in 2023.
- Cost share for adult vaccines will be eliminated in 2023 for Medicare Part D recipients.

- Source: KFF.org, Forbes.com

Medicare Numbers

- The standard monthly Medicare Part B premium will be \$164.90. This is a decrease of \$5.20. The IRMA (Income Related Monthly Adjustment Amount) will impact premiums.
- Part A deductible will increase by \$44 to \$1600 in 2023.
- The annual deductible for Part B will be \$226. This is a decrease of \$7.
- The average Part D premium will fall by 58 cents to \$31.50

- Source: aha.org, cms.gov

