

STROKE AWARENESS MONTH

The Journey to Stroke Recovery



Rehabilitation is an important part of a patient's journey to stroke recovery and it occurs along the entire continuum of care. All patients admitted to SMH with an acute/subacute stroke will be assessed by the health disciplines team as soon as possible. After the acute phase ongoing rehabilitation may continue in an inpatient, outpatient, or home based setting. The goal of rehabilitation is to help patient's regain their functional independence. Research has shown that the most recovery is made within the first three months post stroke, but patients can continue to recover for many months and even years after their stroke. Recovery looks different for everyone!

What can I do to make a difference?

- Encourage patients to participate in self-care activities.
- Maintain proper positioning of hemiparetic limbs.
- Assist patients up to a bedside chair at meal times (if appropriate).
- Transfer to/from patients' strong side (if appropriate).

Post Stroke Depression

Post stroke depression is the most common psychiatric complication after a stroke. It affects about 30% of all stroke survivors. Despite this post stroke depression is frequently overlooked and under diagnosed. It can significantly impact a patient's recovery and can hinder functional outcomes. If you notice your patient is presenting with low and/or changes in mood notify the care team.

Post Stroke Fatigue

Approximately 50% of stroke patients experience post stroke fatigue. *The Heart and Stroke Foundation* defines post stroke fatigue as a “multidimensional motor-perceptive, emotional, and cognitive experience characterized by a feeling of early exhaustion with weariness, lack of energy, and aversion to effort that develops during physical or mental activity”. Post stroke fatigue is not correlated with stroke severity and it cannot be relieved with rest. Post stroke fatigue is under recognized and can have a serious impact on a patient's ability to function and overall recovery. Look out for these signs and symptoms: overwhelming tiredness, lack of energy to engage in daily activities, abnormal need for naps, rest, and/or extended sleep, more easily tired by daily activities, feelings of fatigue without reasonable explanation.