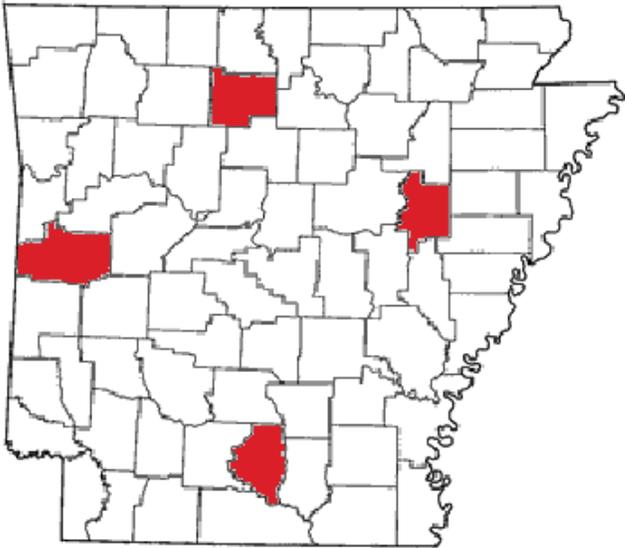


What if YOU knew that EVERYONE in Calhoun, Scott, Searcy, and Woodruff Counties was going to have a life-threatening medical emergency this year...¹⁵



leaving nearly 1,900 Arkansans dead² and thousands more seriously disabled.

WOULD YOU TRY TO DO SOMETHING TO HELP?



EVERY YEAR, there are about 32,000 reported cases of stroke in Arkansas,³ and nearly 1,900 Arkansans lose their lives battling a stroke.²



WHY SHOULD ARKANSAS LEGISLATORS BE CONCERNED?

In Arkansas, the stroke death rate is 1.4 times the national average, and the state ranks first in stroke mortality in the United States.¹ Nearly 1,900 Arkansans die from stroke each year.²

Stroke drains the economy. In Arkansas, there are about 32,000 reported cases of stroke each year, with an annual price tag of \$180 million in medical expenses and \$290 million in lost productivity.³

Stroke care is insufficient and fragmented in Arkansas. Without adequate treatment — within three hours of the first symptoms, stroke victims can suffer severe neurological damage or death.⁴

Awareness of stroke warning signs and the need for urgent care is dangerously low. Only 17.5% of Arkansans are aware of all the correct symptoms of a stroke and the need to call 911.⁵

Many Arkansans have a ticking time bomb—inside them. Two of the most common causes of stroke are high blood pressure and high cholesterol. Smoking doubles the risk for stroke.^{6,7} **Over 31% of Arkansans have high blood pressure, over 40% have high cholesterol and over 22% smoke.⁸**

WHAT CAN ARKANSAS LEGISLATORS DO?

Advocate for a stroke system of care, including wireless, enhanced 911 coverage. Coordinated stroke response and care gives stroke victims in Arkansas access to the most effective treatment.⁹

Support efforts to fund certified primary stroke centers. Stroke centers are medical facilities staffed by health care professionals with specific training in rapidly diagnosing and treating strokes.¹⁰ **There are only three certified primary stroke centers in Arkansas (Little Rock and Fort Smith).¹¹**

Promote stroke awareness campaigns. Awareness of stroke warning signs and the need to call 911 saves lives and reduces disability.¹²

Make healthy choices easier. Support policies and programs that will help Arkansans make lifestyle and behavior changes to reduce their risk for stroke. 80% of strokes can be prevented.¹³

Extend insurance coverage. Support policies that include health care coverage for chronic disease prevention, such as tobacco cessation and blood pressure and cholesterol screening, treatment and control.

Support policies focused on Arkansans at high risk for stroke. Implement programs focused on high-risk groups such as African-Americans, Hispanics, uninsured, low-income Arkansans, and the elderly.¹⁴

WHAT IS A STROKE?

A stroke happens when the blood supply to the brain is cut off or when a blood vessel bursts. Without oxygen, brain cells begin to die and death or permanent disability can result.

The five warning signs of stroke are:

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm, or leg, especially on one side of the body;
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding;
- 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 is an emergency.
Call 911**

ARKANSAS LEGISLATIVE POLICY BRIEF REFERENCES

- ¹American Heart Association. *Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics—2010 Update*. Dallas, TX: American Heart Association; 2010;(1-40)10. American Stroke Association Website. Available at http://www.americanheart.org/downloadable/heart/1265665152970DS-3241%20HeartStrokeUpdate_2010.pdf.
- ²Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. *Compressed Mortality File 1999-2006*. CDC WONDER On-line Database, compiled from Compressed Mortality File 1999-2006 Series 20 No. 2L, 2009. Accessed at <http://wonder.cdc.gov/cmfi-icd10.html> on Apr 12, 2010 11:40:13 AM.
- ³Milken Institute. *An Unhealthy American: The Economic Burden of Chronic Disease*. Milken Institute, Chronic Disease Impact Website. Available at: <http://www.chronicdiseaseimpact.com/ebcd.taf>.
- ⁴American Heart Association. "Reducing Delay in Seeking Treatment by Patients with Acute Coronary Syndrome and Stroke." *Circulation* 2006;114(168-182):168-171. Online version available at <http://circ.ahajournals.org/cgi/content/full/114/2/168>.
- ⁵Arkansas Health Statistics Branch, Arkansas Department of Health. *Arkansas Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System 2007 Survey*. Unpublished data.
- ⁶Center for Disease Control and Prevention. "Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention: Addressing the Nation's Leading Killers." *At a Glance 2009*. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, 2009;3. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/publications/AAG/dhdsp.htm>.
- ⁷American Heart Association. *Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics—2010 Update*. Dallas, TX: American Heart Association; 2010;(1-40)14-15.. American Stroke Association Website. Available at http://www.americanheart.org/downloadable/heart/1265665152970DS-3241%20HeartStrokeUpdate_2010.pdf.
- ⁸Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Arkansas Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System 2007 Survey*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Web site. Available at <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/BRFSS/page.asp?cat=XX&yr=2007&state=AR#XX>.
- ⁹Schwamm L, Pancioli A, Acker J, Goldstein L, Zorowitz R, Shephard T, Moyer P, Gorman, M, Johnston S, Duncan P, Gorelick P, Frank J, Stranne S, Smith R, Federspiel W, Horton K, Magnis E; American Stroke Association/Task Force on the Development of Stroke Systems. "Recommendations for the Establishment of Stroke Systems of Care." *Stroke*. 2005;36;2-4. Available at: <http://stroke.ahajournals.org/cgi/reprint/36/3/690>.
- ¹⁰Mitka, M. "Researchers Hope Measuring Performance Will Improve Stroke Care and Prevention." *JAMA*. 2010;303(1):17-18. Online version available at <http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/full/303/1/17>.
- ¹¹The Joint Commission. *Helping Healthcare Organizations Help Patients*. The Joint Commission on Accredited Healthcare Organizations, Quality Check Website. Available at: <http://www.qualitycheck.org/consumer/searchQCR.aspx>.
- ¹²Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Awareness of Stroke Warning Symptoms: 13 States and the District of Columbia." 2005. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*. 2008;57(18);485. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5718a2.htm>.
- ¹³National Institutes of Health. "Brain Basics: Preventing Stroke." National Institutes of Health Publication No. 04-3440b. Available on National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke's website at: http://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/stroke/preventing_stroke.htm. Accessed on 4/12/2010.
- ¹⁴Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Racial/Ethnic and Socioeconomic Disparities in Multiple Risk Factors for Heart Disease and Stroke — United States, 2003." *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*. 2005;54(05);113-117. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5405a1.htm>.
- ¹⁵U.S. Census Bureau. "Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Counties of Arkansas: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2008." Population Division, Release Date: March 19, 2009.