

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

A stroke journey: A view from within a Northsider's experience

By Mary Anderson

Editor's Note: The following is the first in a series of three articles discussing and sharing information about strokes. This piece is a combination of information from the American Stroke Association, National Stroke Association and personal experiences of the author.

I am a stroke survivor. My definition of "stroke survivor" is; you choose to pursue life, and not become a "stroke victim."

This is a challenge. One is left with disabilities that can range from minimal to severe. It definitely changes your life.

The purpose of this series is to raise the awareness of stroke symptoms & treatment. I can't change what has happened to me but this information could help you avoid a stroke. In each article I will share Stroke facts & personal information as it relates to the facts.

I had my stroke in 2001. The following are the sequence of events. You can see that three of the Stroke Warning Signs were present, but I didn't recognize them soon enough.

In this and upcoming articles I will share how my life took a path I didn't predict.

2000 I was 55 years old, owned my own consulting business, was a wife, mother, grandmother, former Founder and Executive Director of the local Alzheimer's Association Chapter, & community volunteer.

January 24, 2001, 8:00 PM - My husband & I were visiting a friend in the Wausau hospital when I felt a rush of water in my ear. My head began to pound and the room was swirling. As quickly as it appeared-it disappeared. I wondered if I had an ear infection, and continued to visit with my friend for a few more minutes and we then said our goodbyes. I never thought anything serious could happen to me.

January 24, 2001-9:00 PM As I walked away I noticeably (to me) was stepping to the right. At this point I was sure I had an ear infection and made a mental note to call the doctor in the morning. As we were driving home I mentioned to my husband that I had a dizzy spell-but I didn't make a big deal of it. Oh, if I could only turn back the clock!

January 24, 2001-9:20 PM We stopped to eat dinner-no symptoms.

January 25, 2001-12:30 AM When I arrived home I went to bed. I walked up the 15 stair steps to our bedroom with no difficulty. I had no idea that would be the last time I would walk up or down this familiar flight of stairs with ease. I learned later that the incident I described above was likely a TIA (transient ischemic stroke.) A warning!

January 25, 2001-8:00 AM I awoke & tried to sit up. I kept falling over. I frantically awoke my husband. He helped me sit up. Then I tried to walk but I could not. My right side was too

Stroke Warning Signs

- Sudden numbness or weakness in the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body
- Sudden confusion or trouble speaking or understanding
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness or loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause

Courtesy of the American Stroke Association

Resource Information

American Heart Association
1-800-242-8721
www.americanheart.org

American Stroke Association
1-888-478-7653
www.StrokeAssociation.org

National Stroke Association
1-800-787-6537
www.stroke.org

weak. My whole world changed that day (or the night before). I was terrified!

My husband called 911. They arrived and checked my blood pressure. It was 250/120. A normal blood pressure is 140/90. I was immediately transported to the hospital.

Upon arrival at the hospital an MRI was done. Later the doctor diagnosed a Stroke. I have full paralysis on my right side from the shoulder to my toes. (A Stroke can affect different parts of the body depending on what part of the brain it attacks.)

I was admitted to two hospitals over the next two months, followed by Day Rehab for six weeks, & continued outpatient rehabilitation & a home exercise program for the rest of my life.

There was some important information that I didn't know that might have changed my Stroke outcome. This is information I hope you will learn from

me, and remember it starting with the Stroke Warning Signs.

In the next issue I will continue with information on tPA (a clot buster injection), Stroke Risk Factors, and more.

Start filling your recycling bins



Photo by Bill Longe

Thousands of the new city recycling bins stacked up on the soccer fields of Gompers/Black Hawk school.

By Marlene Hardick

The Northside News

Most of the Northside has received the new bins that change how we have been recycling in this city. Start filling them now. Check the new schedule that comes with the bin. The first collection will take place during the week of Sept.12. New city trucks with robotic arms will begin collecting the carts' contents. In 2007, similar bins will be used for garbage. Until then, residents should do what they are doing now.

Many new kinds of recyclables can go in the bins. Every kind of plastic up to #8. Glass. Every kind of paper—newspaper, junk mail, cereal boxes, toilet paper rolls, and cardboard. No tissues, paper towels, napkins and paper plates. Put shredded paper into a paper bag. Tin cans, aluminum cans,

and aerosol containers can all go in. No need to bundle or separate anything. Collections will be taken to a site in South Madison and sorted.

Bins come in sizes of 35-65-95 gallons. Anyone who chose the wrong size can trade it in after the first 90-day trial period. Sorry-the only color is forest green.

The Northside's own George Dreckmann, Madison Recycling Coordinator, has been getting this organized and answering questions. Remember not to park in front of the bins on collection day.

Drivers will come to doors to roll out the bins of disabled citizens. Information on how to apply for disability assistance or info on how to recycle anything is available at www.ci.madison.wi.us/streets/ or 267-2626.

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