

SOME CHILDREN HAVE HIGHER RISK OF STROKE

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Boys were found to be 28 percent more likely than girls to have a stroke and African-American children had more than twice the risk of stroke overall, according to a study published in *Neurology*. Asian children had similar risks as white children for all stroke types. Hispanic children had the lowest risk for ischemic stroke and intracerebral hemorrhage.

Walter Truax, M.D. of Culicchia Neurological Clinic, feels that African-American children may have a higher incidence of stroke because of sickle cell disease but emphasizes that stroke can occur at any age. "Children with sickle cell disease should be followed serially with transcranial doppler ultrasound, which can be performed in our office," says Truax. "Children at high risk of stroke have increased blood flow velocity in the brain. Stroke incidence can be decreased by blood transfusions."

Previous studies have shown that adult males have higher rates of ischemic stroke and intracerebral hemorrhage. Likewise, black adults have been shown to have a higher risk of stroke. These findings have been explained by the higher rates of stroke risk factors - smoking, diabetes and hypertension - in these groups.

MICRODISCECTOMY: A LESS INVASIVE BACK SURGERY

Using a microscope and specially designed instruments, neurosurgeons at Culicchia Neurological Clinic are repairing herniated discs with a minimally intrusive, state-of-the art procedure called microdiscectomy. Surgeons remove damaged disc fragments and tissue which exert pressure on the nerve by making only small incisions along the spinal column. When compared with traditional surgery for a herniated disc, microdiscectomy involves smaller incisions, a faster recovery, less damage to surrounding tissue, less blood loss and less scar tissue formation.

"A microdiscectomy typically takes about an hour, and many patients are up and moving within 4 hours and usually go home the same day," explains John Steck, M.D., neurosurgeon with Culicchia Neurological Clinic. "This is in sharp contrast to the four to five days of hospitalization with the traditional laminectomy disc surgery," he said.

THINK BACK ALL DAY LONG

Don't let a long day take its toll on your back. Remember to sit up straight and stretch your back often. Shift positions every half hour to avoid stiffness. And exercise.

According to Dr. Meda Colvin of Culicchia Neurological Clinic, the benefits of exercise have long been documented and is an integral part of a recovery program. Low impact exercises combined with appropriate stretching and range of motion exercises can strengthen and condition muscles. A regular exercise program can also improve sleeping habits and result in weight loss, both necessary for successful pain management.

NEUROLOGICAL SURGERY

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NEUROSURGERY/ COMPLEX SPINE

John C. Steck, M.D.

NEURO-ONCOLOGY

Syed Nasir, M.D.

NEUROSURGERY/ NEUROVASCULAR SURGERY

Frank Culicchia, M.D.

INTERVENTIONAL NEURORADIOLOGY

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PHYSICAL MEDICINE/ PAIN MANAGEMENT

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