

# Road to Better Health

Twice Monthly  
Health & Wellness  
Newsletter Brought to you by



Located at **Pilot**

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## Ask the Nurse Practitioner



### Stroke

Q: How is a stroke determined?

A: Imaging and blood tests determine whether a stroke has occurred.

Q: What additional risk factors for stroke cannot be changed?

A: Some risk factors that cannot be changed include age (stroke risk doubles for each decade after age 55), heredity (family history of stroke), race (African Americans have higher rates of Diabetes and hypertension which puts them at risk for stroke) and prior stroke (mortality is increased with prior strokes).

Q: How can I find out more about the Mediterranean diet?

A: The American Heart Association website ([www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org)) has sample menus and foods that are low in saturated fat, which is the basis for this type of diet.

## Recognizing and Treating Stroke

By Patricia Smith, FNP – Knoxville, TN

A stroke, or a brain attack, is the loss of brain function due to either ischemia (lack of blood flow) or hemorrhage (bleeding). As a result, the affected area of the brain cannot function normally, which might result in an inability to move one or more limbs on one side of the body, failure to understand or formulate speech, or a vision impairment on one side of the visual field. In 2011, stroke was the second most frequent cause of death worldwide, accounting for 6.2 million deaths. Overall, two-thirds of strokes occurred in those over 65 years old. Stroke is a life-threatening situation, requiring immediate evaluation at a hospital.

Signs that you may be having a stroke include:

1. Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body
2. Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
3. Sudden trouble seeing or blurred vision in one or both eyes
4. Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
5. Sudden severe headache with no known cause

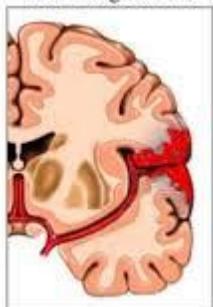
Risk Factors for Stroke:

1. High Blood Pressure - accounts for 35-50 % of stroke risk. Blood pressure reduction of 10mmHg systolic or 5mmHg diastolic reduces risk of stroke by 40%.
2. Atrial fibrillation (rapid heart rate)
3. Diabetes - increases risk of stroke by 2 to 3 times
4. Smoking
5. High Cholesterol
6. Heavy use of Alcohol
7. Being Overweight
8. Physical Inactivity

A stroke is treated with anticoagulant and/or antiplatelet medications. You can decrease your risk by more than half by consuming a Mediterranean-style diet.

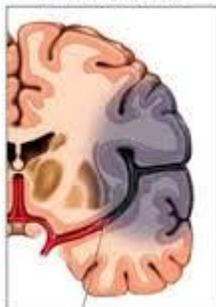
The following scenario is an actual occurrence of a middle aged man who suffered a stroke, and was able to walk into one of our clinics. The patient was a truck driver who had slept for 8 hours in his truck, and upon waking noticed left-sided weakness. He had "the worst headache of my life." He was unable to lift his left arm, and he dragged his left foot. The initial flag for stroke was one-sided weakness-this is never normal. He was sent by ambulance to a stroke-certified hospital ER where his stroke was confirmed. He recovered quickly, and has returned to work.

Hemorrhagic Stroke



Hemorrhage/blood leaks into brain tissue.

Ischemic Stroke



Clot stops blood supply to an area of the brain

## Obesity in Professional Truck Drivers

One of the top 5 health concerns for Professional Truck Drivers today is Obesity. The sedentary lifestyle of most over-the-road drivers, coupled with limited healthy food choices on the road contribute to this nationwide epidemic. While roughly 35% of US adults are considered obese, some sources claim that over 50% of Professional Truck Drivers are obese! With the FMCSA medical examination guidelines becoming more stringent all the time, it is likely going to be more difficult for a driver to pass a DOT physical if he/she is obese.

If you are currently considered obese, we would highly encourage you to be pro-active and begin your weight loss program well before these guidelines change! Here are some tips to staying healthy on the road:

1. Bring your gym with you: Travel with weights, a jump rope, or any other exercise equipment you can easily fit in your cab. Make it a priority to get at least 30 minutes of exercise a day. Brisk walking, jogging, jumping rope and jumping jacks, combined with some strength training with weights is an excellent combination.
2. Don't waste time: While you are waiting for a load for an indeterminate amount of time, take a walk around the area instead of sitting in your truck.
3. Download energizing tunes: It is always more fun to exercise to music that keeps you moving fast.
4. Invest in a small refrigerator or cooler: If you have a place to store your healthy store bought items, you will not have to eat greasy fast food. You can store meats/dairy/vegetables and make your own meals on the road.
5. Eat regularly: although it is tempting to avoid frequent stops while driving, it is important to fuel your body with healthy meals/snacks all day long. When you starve your body all day, your metabolism actually slows down, which leads to weight gain. When you finally do eat at night, you are so hungry that you will likely end up eating a heavy, unhealthy, fast-food meal. Keep your truck stocked with nuts, fruits, vegetables, lean meats, low-fat cheeses and yogurt instead.
6. Stay hydrated: it is best to drink a total of 3 liters of fluids each day. Try to alternate coffee/sodas/juices with a bottle of water in between.
7. Decrease soda intake: non-diet sodas/juices/sports drinks/energy drinks are loaded with empty calories. Try to cut back on these sources of fluid intake. Many people are able to lose excess weight by simply cutting out these high calorie drinks.

### We Want to Hear From You

Road to Better Health is a new publication designed to provide you with relevant health and wellness information. We seek your input and comments to improve the newsletter.

- What questions would you like answered by our Nurse Practitioners?
- What recipes or other food information would you like to share with the readership?
- What topic would you like to see discussed more thoroughly in an article?

Please send an e-mail to [services@urgentcaretravel.com](mailto:services@urgentcaretravel.com) with your feedback, suggestions, input, etc.

Feel free to share Road to Better Health with your colleagues. UrgentCareTravel can also make this newsletter available to companies and their employees. If your company is interested in distributing Road to Better Health or you are not subscribed to Road to Better Health, please send an e-mail request to [services@urgentcaretravel.com](mailto:services@urgentcaretravel.com).

### UrgentCareTravel Locations

UCT – Knoxville (865) 329-9492  
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UCT – Oklahoma City (405) 789-0212  
406 South Morgan Road  
Oklahoma City, OK 73128  
Pilot Store #460 I-40, Exit 140

UCT – Cartersville (770) 386-0707  
970 Cassville-White Road NE  
Cartersville, GA 30120  
Pilot Store #67 I-75, Exit 296

## The Wellness Corner: Healthy Eating With the Mediterranean Diet

A recent Mediterranean diet blogpost from the Mayo Clinic lists reduced risk of death from heart disease and cancer as well as reduced incidence of Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases as just a few of its benefits. Its emphasis is on eating an anti-oxidant rich, plant based diet. This means the basis of EVERY meal should be vegetables, fruits, whole grains, legumes, nuts, and healthy fats (olive oil instead of butter) seasoned with herbs and spices instead of salt. Fish or chicken can SUPPLEMENT this plant based diet (fish should be eaten at least twice a week) and red meat should be limited to no more than twice a month.



Again, just to re-emphasize...even when fish, poultry or meat ARE included in a meal their proportion (serving size) should be moderate relative to the rest of the (plant based) meal. Avoid breaded or fried fish or chicken altogether and opt instead for grilled, broiled, or baked fish/chicken. Replace high fat, highly processed meats like sausage and bacon with modest portions of lean meat. Choose low-fat dairy like skim milk, yogurt and cheese in place of higher fat whole milk or ice cream.



Eat fruits and veggies with the least amount of processing possible and switch to whole grain breads, pasta, rice and cereals. Include heart healthy nuts and seeds which, when eaten in moderation, provide heart healthy fat, fiber, and protein. Smart snacks include raw veggies like carrots and celery, whole fruits like apples and bananas, air-popped popcorn, or a small handful of nuts or seeds per day (some good choices; almonds, walnuts, pistachios, cashews, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds). Pass on added butter and opt for a drizzle of olive or canola oil instead. Finally, use herbs and spices to deepen flavor without adding unhealthy fats or salt.

The Mediterranean diet is a delicious and healthy way to eat. Many of those who switch to this style of eating say they'll never go back!

## About UrgentCareTravel

UrgentCareTravel (UCT), in partnership with Pilot Flying J, addresses one of the trucking industry's biggest challenges of offering easily accessible and affordable healthcare services for truck drivers. Located at Pilot Flying J Travel Centers, UCT Healthcare Centers offer DOT/non-DOT physicals, minor illness & injuries services, chronic disease screening and management (e.g. diabetes, cholesterol, hypertension), sleep apnea screening and drug screens.

UrgentCareTravel's affordable **Healthcare Membership** programs include physicals, primary care visits, access to onsite fitness centers (where available) and 24x7 Telemedicine (phone consultations) with a licensed medical professional. With health insurance plans costing more, providing less medical coverage and requiring higher deductible payments, UrgentCareTravel's **Healthcare Membership** program is a cost-effective option to address the healthcare needs of drivers, local businesses and communities.

