



PRESS RELEASE

To: Local Media
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National Black Caucus of State Legislators Tour Beaufort Jasper Hampton Comprehensive Health Services, Inc. and Beaufort Memorial Hospital

Ridgeland, South Carolina – Stroke is a leading cause of serious long-term disability and the third leading cause of death in our country, and African-Americans are at increased risk of stroke and death from stroke. The southeastern United States has the highest incidence of stroke with South Carolina having the highest number of stroke victims.

Based on national statistics and particularly South Carolina incidences, the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) convened the South Carolina Stroke Conference to be held on April 26 – 27, 2002. Conference participants will tour the BJHCHS Port Royal Medical Center and have a discussion led by Dr. Rosalind Dawson, a physician at the center.

According to Daniel R. Thomas, Senior Health Policy Associate for the Caucus, “The conference was conceived from the data developed at the NBCSL Strategic Planning Conference for Health Leaders, April 30, 2000, in Naples, Florida. As follow-up to the conference, Senator Roscoe Dixon suggested a unique working model for the program that includes a first hand health facility experience for participants. The program preparations were achieved with the encouragement and support of Senator Kay Patterson (Columbia, Democrat) and his staff. Ms. Gardenia Ruff, Office of Minority Health, South Carolina Department of Health, was state liaison in planning and preparation for the Conference in collaboration with the American Stroke Association (ASA) an American Heart Association (AHA) that will provide resource materials to program attendees.”

The Caucus said of BJHCHS, “Your support in stroke prevention awareness and in this conference is greatly appreciated and is invaluable to the community, state, and to those who may be at high risk for stroke and the devastating effects of such and unfortunate occurrence.” This program will address the disparities in cardiovascular and stroke incidence and mortality among African Americans in addition to the Department of Health and Human Services’ Healthy People 2010 Report.

SEARCH YOUR HEART

Stomp Out Stroke

Our Church-Based Program for Heart Health
and Stroke Prevention



Fighting Heart Disease and Stroke

Search Your Heart

Church Newsletter Article Repro Sheet

Know the Schemes of the “Evil One” — Stroke!

What's your risk of stroke? If you don't know, you should — and can. Just obey three simple commands:

I. Thou Shall **Reduce** Your Risk of Stroke!

These seven simple suggestions can help you reduce your risk of stroke:

- **Get your blood pressure checked.** If your blood pressure is normal, get it checked at least every two years. If it's near the top of the normal range, or if you have a family history of high blood pressure, your doctor will tell you how often to have it checked.
- **Don't smoke cigarettes.** Smoking cigarettes significantly increases your risks. If you smoke, stop now!
- **Recognize and treat diabetes.** If you have diabetes, never stop taking your medicine without talking to your doctor first.
- **Don't drink too much alcohol.** Men should limit alcohol intake to no more than two drinks a day and women to no more than one. Too much alcohol may increase your blood pressure.
- **Be physically active.** Physical activity helps reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke. Try to get 30 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity activity at least 3–4 times a week.
- **Eat a healthy diet.** Enjoy foods that are low in saturated fat, cholesterol and sodium, and include lots of fruits and vegetables.
- **Have regular medical checkups.**

II. Thou Shall **Recognize** Signs of Stroke!

Know the warning signs of stroke and act immediately if they occur. The warning signs of stroke are:

- Sudden weakness or numbness of the face, arm or leg on one side of the body.
- Sudden dimness or loss of vision, particularly in one eye.
- Loss of speech, or trouble talking or understanding speech.
- Sudden, severe headaches with no apparent cause.
- Unexplained dizziness, unsteadiness or sudden falls, especially along with any of the previous symptoms.

III. Thou Shall **Respond** Immediately to Stroke!

If you notice one or more of these signs, don't wait. Get medical help fast! You might save a life, and you can increase the odds of a speedy recovery.

So respond by:

1. Calling 911 or your local Emergency Medical System.
2. Going to the nearest medical facility with 24-hour emergency care, if you can get the person to the hospital quicker by driving yourself.

It's important to realize that not all of these signs occur in every stroke. In some cases, the symptoms subside and then return.

*Sample of educational material used in
Lifestyle Change Sessions*