

Women and Stroke: What You Need to Know

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Transcript

[0:00 Introduction]

Dr. Ada Tang: Stroke can happen in both men and women, but there are some things that are unique to women in terms of risk factors for stroke and how stroke affects them. Did you know that one-quarter of people with stroke are under the age of 65? So this means that stroke isn't limited to older people only. Women can actually experience stroke at any point in their lifespan.

[What stroke risk factors are unique to women? 0:14]

Dr. Ada Tang: There are certain things that are unique to women. For example, certain birth control medications can increase the risk of blood clots, which can increase the risk of stroke. There are also pregnancy-related complications, such as gestational diabetes, that can increase a woman's chance of stroke. And even as we get older, during the menopause transition, when there's a reduction in estrogen levels, that also can increase the risk of stroke. Women tend to live longer than men, and so they tend also to be older when they experience stroke. This means that they might have other health conditions that they're experiencing at the same time. And they also experience more severe stroke when they're older.

[How can we improve outcomes for women after stroke? 0:53]

Dr. Ada Tang: Many women find themselves in the role of caregiver, and it makes it hard for them to prioritize their own health. As health professionals, it's important that we make sure that women understand the services that are available for them after they've had a stroke, and make referrals to programs like rehabilitation, to exercise programs, to support groups, and other services that can help support women as they recover from stroke.

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