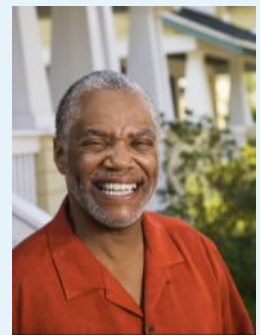


STROKE RECOVERY ASSOCIATION OF BC

RECOVERING FROM A STROKE



A Guide for Stroke Survivors, Families, and Caregivers



INTRODUCTION

Stroke Recovery Association of BC

The Stroke Recovery Association of BC (SRABC) is a non-profit organization. We have been offering information and programs for stroke survivors, after they leave hospital since 1979. Through our regional Stroke Recovery Branches, we are committed to assisting stroke survivors and their caregivers throughout the province to improve their overall quality of life. Our vision is that every stroke survivor in BC has respect, inclusion, and support in their home community.

Our Message: There is life after stroke!

After more than 30 years of helping stroke survivors and their caregivers in BC we have learned some vital lessons that we want to share with you:

- 1.** Never give up **hope** and never stop trying. We have seen with our own eyes that being determined to get better makes a big difference. You may never fully recover but you can keep on improving.
- 2.** There is **life after stroke**. Many stroke survivors go on to have successful and enjoyable lives. They learn to make the most of the abilities they have.
- 3.** **Support** is very important. Family and friends play a huge role. The support of other stroke survivors and their understanding and encouragement really helps. Caregivers also need support.
- 4.** You need to set **goals**. As long as you achieve some of them you are moving in the right direction. If you fail then break your goals down into smaller steps.
- 5.** Never give up **hope** and never stop trying. We can't say that often enough!



TABLE OF CONTENTS

We hope you find the information in this booklet useful. If you have further questions after reading, please CONTACT US:

Stroke Recovery Association of BC

Tel. 604.688.3603 Toll Free. 1.888.313.3377

Email. office@strokerecoverybc.ca Website. www.strokerecoverybc.ca

Mailing Address. 301 - 1212 West Broadway, Vancouver, BC V6H 3V1

Recovering from a Stroke	4
How to Join a Stroke Recovery Branch	5
Stroke Recovery Branch List	6-7
How to Donate	8
Other Information and Resources	9
Understanding the Brain	10-11
What is a Stroke?	12
Effects of a Stroke	13
Preventing Another Stroke	14
Frequently Asked Questions	15

RECOVERING FROM A STROKE

How well you recover from a stroke depends upon many factors, including how much and which parts of your brain were damaged, and your health before the stroke. Doctors can provide surgery, medication and other treatment. The work you do with your stroke rehabilitation team in the hospital, rehabilitation centre and in the community is very important to your recovery.

WE CAN HELP



Here are a few useful guidelines to help you get the most out of your rehabilitation:

- **Rest:** Tiredness and fatigue are common after a stroke.
- **Simplify:** Keep activities and information as simple as possible.
- **Repetition:** Learning after stroke requires repeating of information and practice of skills.
- **Structure:** A daily and weekly structure and routine are helpful.
- **Consistency:** Do things the same way each time.
- **Learn to compensate:** You have to adapt and change from past ways of doing things. For example use a day-timer or calendar to help you to remember things.

HOW TO JOIN A STROKE RECOVERY BRANCH

Stroke Recovery Branches

SRABC has around 40 local Stroke Recovery Branches across the province. Branches provide a friendly place where stroke survivors, families, friends, and caregivers can get encouragement, help, and support. We offer a range of programs designed to support stroke survivors in the community after they leave hospital. Branches range in size from approximately 10 to 180 members. The programs on offer vary depending on the resources available.

How to Join a Stroke Recovery Branch

- Contact the Branch Coordinator directly. Please refer to the list of Stroke Recovery Branches on pages 6-7 of this booklet for branch contact information.
- Alternatively, you can CONTACT US –contact information can be found on page 3.

We offer these activities at our stroke recovery branches:

1. Physical exercises
2. Communication and memory exercises
3. Social interaction and recreation
4. Support from fellow stroke survivors
5. Caregiver support
6. Stroke education
7. Help finding other health and community resources

STROKE RECOVERY BRANCHES

Vancouver Coastal Region

NORTH VANCOUVER

Christine Alexander 778-340-5803
pc@nssrc.org

SECHelt/SUNSHINE COAST

Marilyn Kendall Smith
604-885-3059
kendallsmith@dccnet.com

RICHMOND

Phone: 604-688-3603
office@strokerecoverybc.ca

VANCOUVER DOUGLAS PARK

Matthew Millar 604-789-7772
douglasparkstroke@gmail.com

VANCOUVER EAST

Jennifer Tse 604-351-8785
vaneaststrokerecovery@gmail.com

VANCOUVER KILLARNEY

Mei-Lin Cappuccino 778-397-4030
baskitkasedesigns@gmail.com

VANCOUVER SHAUGHNESSY

Kathy Parmley 604-733-4545
kparmley@telus.net
Peggy Kane 604-261-7619
pfitz@shaw.ca

VANCOUVER STRATHCONA

Pat Chow 604-713-1850
Patricia.chow@vancouver.ca

VANCOUVER TEMPLETON

Valerie Offer 604-837-7184
voffer@telus.net

VANCOUVER WEST END

Matthew Millar 604-789-7772
douglasparkstroke@gmail.com

POWELL RIVER

Trudy Simpson 1- 604-485-6396
derrys@shaw.ca

Fraser Valley Region

ABBOTSFORD

Marilyn Piticco 604-882-4672
mpiticco@telus.net

BURNABY NORTH

Tracey Jones 604-431-9897
tstaffjones@yahoo.com

BURNABY SOUTH

Jaime Helgason 778-737-9224
jthelgason@hotmail.com

COQUITLAM

Margaret Hansen 604-927-6093
mhansen@coquitlam.ca

LANGLEY

Marilyn Piticco 604-882-4672
mpiticco@telus.net

MAPLE RIDGE/PITT

MEADOWS

Susan Dehnel 604-462-0380
srabcsusan@yahoo.ca

PORT COQUITLAM

Deanna MacKinnon 604-942-2334
write4me@telus.net

SURREY

Deanna MacKinnon 604-942-2334
write4me@telus.net

DELTA

Dawn Sillett 604-946-2731
dsillett@dccnet.com

WHITE ROCK

Gayl Hutchison 604-541-1290
gayl@shaw.ca

As of March 2011 Tel. 604.688.3603 Toll Free. 1.888.313.3377
Email. office@strokerecoverybc.ca Website. www.strokerecoverybc.ca

STROKE RECOVERY BRANCHES

Interior Region

CRANBROOK

Dalcy Gripich 250-426-3994
gripich@telus.net

KAMLOOPS

Shona Cox 250-320-1348
shona_c@telus.net

KELOWNA

Eva Bartee 250-763-0556
evabart@telus.net

SALMON ARM

Ruth Hay 250-832-6213
grhay@sunwave.net

TRAIL & DISTRICT

Rachel Jansen 250-368-9306
strokerecoverytrail@gmail.com

VERNON

Brenda Paul 250-542-2555
brendaul@telus.net

Northern Region

PRINCE GEORGE

Julia Cook 250-563-3819
jncook@telus.net

VANDERHOOF

Luella Novak 250-441-0086
luella_novak@hotmail.com

Vancouver Island Region

CAMPBELL RIVER

Phone: 604-688-3603
office@strokerecoverybc.ca

COMOX VALLEY

Jenny Gohl 250-871-0553
jennyg33@hotmail.com

COWICHAN VALLEY

Barbara Park 250-246-4952
barb_p55@yahoo.com

LADYSMITH

Connie Parman 250-924-7772
sea222burns@gmail.com

NANAIMO

Rose Zajonskowski 250-753-5328
office@strokerecoverybc.ca

OCEANSIDE (PARKSVILLE)

Kathleen Falvai 250-752-9796
kathleenfalvai@shaw.ca

SAANICH PENINSULA

Lyll Copeland 250-652-3016
copel@shaw.ca

VICTORIA

Zoe Friesen 250-383-2623
zoeffriesen9@gmail.com

As of March 2011 Tel. 604.688.3603 Toll Free. 1.888.313.3377
Email. office@strokerecoverybc.ca Website. www.strokerecoverybc.ca

HOW TO DONATE



Donate to SRABC

Having a stroke is devastating. One minute you are a fully functioning person, the next, you can't think, can't speak, can't feel and can hardly move. There are 6,500 strokes in BC every year.

Hospitals do a great job of saving people who survive a stroke but sooner or later those survivors go back home. What then?

When you decide to donate to Stroke Recovery Association of BC you help build a world where every stroke survivor has respect, inclusion, and support in their home community. Please help to bring stroke survivors in BC back to life by making a donation today.

Cheques to Stroke Recovery Association of BC can be mailed to us at 301-1212 West Broadway, Vancouver, BC V6H 3V1

OR you can donate through our website at www.strokerecoverybc.ca by clicking on the "DONATE NOW" button.

If you have any questions about donating to SRABC, please CONTACT US.



OTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

GF Strong Rehabilitation Centre: in Vancouver offers regular community education sessions called Understanding Stroke. If you can't attend one they can send you the information by email, fax or through the mail.

Ph. 604-734-1313

Resources from Heart and Stroke Foundation

StrokeLine Newsletter: The newsletter is produced three times a year and is for stroke survivors and family members. The newsletter provides useful information on recovering from a stroke and adopting a healthy lifestyle.

You've had a TIA (mini-stroke): You've had a Transient Ischemic Attack (TIA) is for patients and their families and caregivers. This booklet provides information about TIAs and their link to strokes and why TIAs are a medical emergency.

Let's Talk About Stroke Booklet: Every stroke is different, but this booklet tries to answer the questions most stroke survivors ask. It provides information that will help you, your caregiver, and your family to understand stroke and the recovery process. Includes "My Stroke Diary" where you can keep your personal record of your stroke and recovery, set goals, and track your progress.

Available in: English, Chinese, and Punjabi.

Coping with Stress: A joint publication of the Heart and Stroke Foundation and the Canadian Mental Health Association. The booklet describes the definition of stress, stress index, understanding stress, coping with stress, effects on health, preventing stress, and tips for dealing with stress and tension.

Heart and Stroke Foundation of BC and Yukon

Ph. 604-736-8732

Canadian Stroke Network

Getting on With the Rest of Your Life After Stroke: An interactive work book with information about setting goals, doing exercise, blood pressure measurement, medication diary, relaxation techniques, brain exercises, ideas for crafts.

Ph. 613-562-5800 ext. 8593

info@canadianstrokenetwork.ca

Websites

The best way to find information on the internet is to use an on line search engine like Google. Here are just a few links to get you started.

www.brainstreams.ca

This website aims to improve education on the brain and brain injuries, to help reduce isolation and to promote opportunities for collaboration.

www.canadianstrokenetwork.ca

This website aims to reduce the physical and societal consequences of stroke.

www.heartandstroke.ca

Heart and Stroke Foundation website.

www.strokeassociation.org

The website of the American Stroke Association.

www.worldstrokecampaign.org

World Stroke Campaign website lists stroke organizations around the world.

www.fcns-caregiving.org/

Family Caregiver Network Society: Help and information for caregivers in BC.

http://www.rorc.research.va.gov/rescue/

RESCUE Website for Caregivers: an online lifeline to help caregivers keep their head above water.

UNDERSTANDING THE BRAIN

It helps to understand how the brain works if you think of it as the workforce of a company. The company runs at peak efficiency when all the parts are working.

Vice Presidents

Up at the front of the company (frontal and temporal lobes) there are several vice presidents. They make the plans for the company; they decide who's going to do what, and when. As things get underway, they get feedback or information as to how well it is going and they judge it - "that looks good or not so good"; and they make further decisions - "change that, keep this"; and show appreciation or annoyance. So, up at the front you have planning, organization, decision making, judgment and appreciation.

Managers

In the middle (parietal lobes) are the managers and each of the managers runs their own department. On the left side of the brain is a speech department (which moves the tongue, lips and throat muscles); a language department (finds the words you want, know what the words mean) and a motor department (moves the right arm and right leg). On the right side is another motor department (moves the left arm and left leg); and a spatial reasoning department - (allows you to find your way around a building, know where you are when driving a car, right down to the basics such as getting your arm through a sleeve). Also over there is a music department and a few incidentals. In a very simplified view, the right side is the picture side and the left side is the talking side.

The managers know what the plan is from the vice presidents, and they make sure it gets carried out. In order to do this, they communicate frequently with one another and with the vice presidents, sending messages back and forth.

Workers

At the bottom, (limbic region, amygdala, basal ganglia) are the workers. They don't know what the plan is from the vice presidents, but they know their job and they do the same job day in and day out- Things like appetite control, need for water, staying alert and awake or going to sleep, and basic emotions (turn on the tears, make the face red, increase the pulse rate).

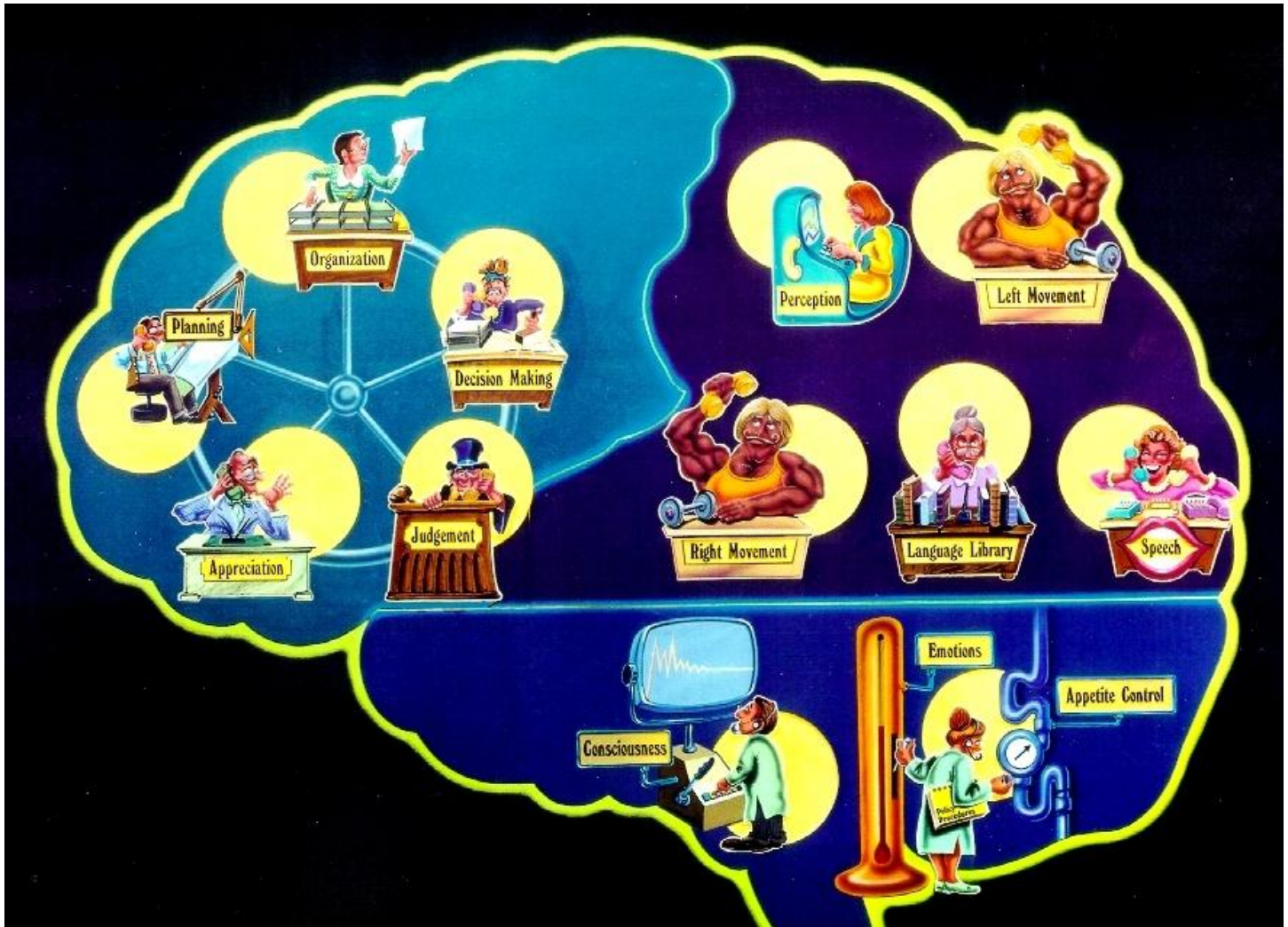
Getting Fired

In a brain injury, someone 'gets fired'. It can be a vice president, a manager or a worker, depending on the injury. You can also have someone go on a leave of absence. That occurs when there is a temporary swelling or loss of blood supply, that recovers in a short time. The result of the injury is to reduce the efficiency of the company. Messages get sent but aren't picked up. The vice presidents get annoyed; the managers get fatigued; and the emotional workers get overwrought. Confusion reigns. A primary purpose of rehabilitation is to find out who got fired and who is still on the job, so messages can be re-routed and the company can become more and more efficient again.

-Verna Amell, Ph.D, Psychologist, GF Strong Rehabilitation Centre (1987)

UNDERSTANDING THE BRAIN

The Brain is like the Workforce of a Company



- Picture supplied by Verna Amell, Ph.D, Psychologist, GF Strong Rehabilitation Centre (1987)

WHAT IS A STROKE?

A stroke is a brain injury caused by:

- Blood flow to the brain being blocked

OR

- A blood vessel bursting in the brain.



When blood stops getting to your brain, the brain cells don't get the oxygen they need. Bleeding in the brain also damages brain cells. Blockages and bleeding cause brain cells to stop working properly or to die.

The Human Brain

The brain is the most complicated organ in your body. It is a network of special cells that are constantly sending signals and messages from one part to another. It controls everything you do. It is responsible for your movements and helps you to walk and to keep your balance. It makes sure that you know where you are going, and that you don't get lost. It controls memory and awareness. It helps you to recognize and remember things, like who the members of your family are. It controls your senses, so you can hear and understand what others are saying to you. It helps you to see what is around you and to understand what you see. It controls your personality and how you behave. All of your thoughts, feelings and emotions come from your brain. It helps you to make decisions. It governs communication including your speech, reading and writing. It even controls life support systems, like breathing and eating.

Your brain is divided into two halves called the right and left hemispheres and four different areas called lobes. Each of these parts is in charge of a different part of your functioning. Having a stroke can affect you in many different ways. It all depends on:

1. Which part of your brain is damaged

2. How serious the damage is

EFFECTS OF A STROKE

Effects of a stroke can include the following. Remember that every stroke and every person is different.

Physical Effects

- Part or all of one side of the body is paralyzed
- Loss of feeling or numbness in part or all of one side of the body
- Loss of awareness of part or all of one side of the body
- Problems with movement, which can affect walking, sitting, bathing, using the toilet, dressing etc.
- Pain
- Fatigue
- Loss of Vision

Cognitive Effects

These effects involve things like thinking, understanding and learning:

- Loss of ability to recognize familiar objects or understand their use
- Difficulty judging distances, shapes and directions
- Difficulty remembering things
- Difficulty learning new information
- Slow, cautious behavior
- Problems planning, organizing and starting tasks
- Problems recognizing current abilities and limitations
- Problems with body image

Communication Effects

- Inability to use or understand words (aphasia)
- Loss of writing abilities
- Slurred speech
- Difficulty in absorbing information

Emotional Effects

- Loss of emotional control (e.g. crying easily - sometimes for no apparent reason)
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Anger
- Frustration
- Loss of self esteem

Personal and Social Effects

- Awkwardness
- Inappropriate behavior
- Isolation
- Family breakdowns
- Loss of privacy
- Change in roles
- Challenges with relationships
- Work and career issues
- Financial concerns

PREVENTING ANOTHER STROKE

People who have had a stroke have a greater chance of having another one, especially during the first year following the first stroke.

There are several things you have some control over that can help you avoid another stroke, including:

- Reducing cholesterol
- Losing Weight
- Getting regular exercise that increases your breathing and your heartbeat
- Limiting your intake of caffeine, animal fats, sugars, and processed foods
- Eating plenty of fruits, vegetables, and high-fiber foods
- Quitting the use of tobacco products
- Limiting your alcohol consumption
- Reducing your stress level
- Avoiding use of certain illegal drugs, such as cocaine



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Q: Are Stroke Recovery Association of BC and the Heart and Stroke Foundation the same thing?

A: NO, we work closely together but are two different organizations.

Heart and Stroke Foundation is a valued partner of SRABC. The Heart and Stroke Foundation contributes significant funding to SRABC. Our provincial office is in the Heart and Stroke Foundation building in Vancouver. We do different things:

- The Stroke Recovery Association of BC works with stroke survivors and their families and caregivers in local communities to improve the survivors' overall quality of life as they recover from a stroke.
- The Heart and Stroke Foundation aims to eliminate heart disease and stroke and reduce their impact through:
 - The advancement of research and its application
 - The promotion of healthy living Advocacy.

Q: What does it cost to join Stroke Recovery Association of BC?

A: There is a small annual membership fee that goes towards the running of SRABC. The branch might also charge a fee to help them to run their stroke recovery program.

Q: What if there is no Stroke Recovery Association branch in my community?

A: We are always looking to open new branches. Please get in touch with us if you are interested in getting one started in your community.

**Recovery from stroke can continue
at branch programs located across BC.**

**To find a branch in your area or for other
information please CONTACT US**



Stroke Recovery Association of BC

Tel. 604.688.3603 Toll Free. 1.888.313.3377

Email. office@strokerecoverybc.ca Website. www.strokerecoverybc.ca

Mailing Address. 301 - 1212 West Broadway, Vancouver, BC V6H 3V1

**The Stroke Recovery Association of BC
gratefully acknowledges the support of our
partners:**

**Heart and Stroke Foundation of BC & Yukon
Province of British Columbia
Provincial Health Services Authority**



Finding answers. For life.