

## Health PERSPECTIVES

"Practical Insights Into The World Of Natural Healing."

### A Preventable Medical Malady With Omega-3 Fatty Acids

by Jade Beutler, R.R.T., R.C.P.

Cerebral vascular stroke is the most common cause of neurological damage in the industrialized Western world, and is a leading cause of death and disability in these countries. Formerly proud, productive and independent persons can be reduced to becoming totally or partially dependent on others for the most basic of needs. The financial as well as emotional impact on the family members of these victims is staggering. The most common cause of cerebral vascular stroke is the formation of a blood clot in the brain occluding blood flow to the brain tissue. Prolonged cessation of blood flow to the brain causes oxygen deprivation and death of brain tissue to the affected area. Another cause of stroke is the rupturing of a blood vessel in the brain. The location and severity of the stroke in the brain determines the level of infirmity, resulting in partial paralysis, inability to speak, and in severe cases, irreversible brain death.

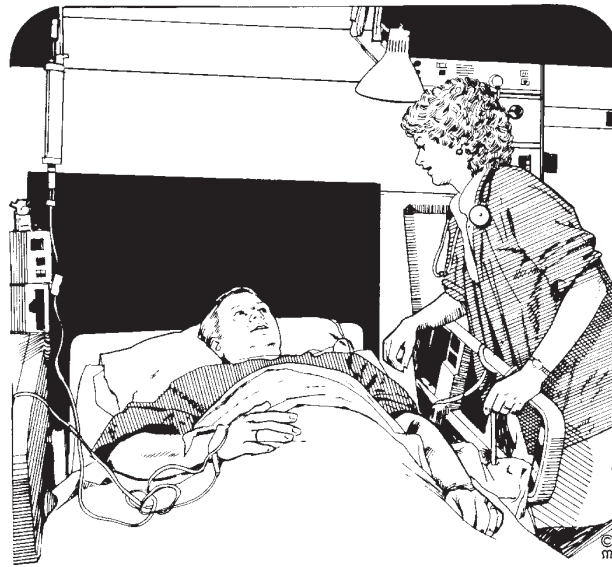
A practical approach to preventing cerebral vascular stroke would ultimately save millions of dollars in health care costs, while significantly reducing the pain and suffering on behalf of the victims and family members. The FDA has just approved a new drug for the treatment of stroke.

Unfortunately you have to have a stroke first, before being administered the medication. If the medication is not given within a very narrow window of time it can actually worsen the stroke. Modern medicine has provided very little in the way of preventing this disabling and sometimes fatal affliction. The message here is that we, as individuals, must

assume responsibility for our health and welfare by initiating dietary supplemental and lifestyle changes to prevent stroke and other medical infirmities.

A sensible solution in the prevention of stroke is found in both the strengthening of blood vessels and in lowering the viscosity of the blood. This two-pronged approach helps to prevent the rupture of cerebral

blood vessels, while at the same time preventing blood platelets from clumping together in the formation of a clot. Flavonoid compounds found in select fruits and vegetables have been found to improve the strength of blood vessels as has vitamin C. Antioxidant nutrients further protect blood vessels from assault and damage from free radicals. Research on a special Omega-3 fatty acid found most abundantly in flaxseed oil might offer the most hope yet. Study results reported in the May, 1995 Journal Stroke suggest that Omega-3 alpha-linolenic acid



may protect against stroke. Analyzing data from the long running Multiple Risk Factor Intervention Trial, researchers found that participants with high blood levels of alpha-linolenic acid had a 37% lower risk of stroke, presumably because of the fatty acid's ability to reduce the platelet "stickiness" and blood viscosity. Omega-3 fatty acids essentially prevent blood platelets from clumping together and forming a dangerous clot by making them "slippery".

Besides a significant reduction in stroke on behalf of alpha-linolenic acid, research originating from Boston University Medical School has found low blood levels of this important Omega-3 fatty acid as a key risk indicator of heart disease. Natural medicine expert, author and doctor, Michael Murray, M.D., suggests that everyone, despite familial history of stroke or heart disease, take at least one to two tablespoons of unrefined flaxseed oil daily as a general protectant against these and other medical ailments. Flaxseed oil is the world's richest and purest source of alpha-linolenic acid, (Omega-3).

Flaxseed oil, nutrients containing flavonoids, and vitamin C can be found in health food stores nation wide.



Mr. Jade Beutler is a licensed health care practitioner with over a decade of hospital and clinical experience in adult and neonatal intensive care, pediatric and emergency medicine. He is the author of *Understanding Fats and Oils, Your Guide to Healing with Essential Fatty Acids* and *Flax For Life*.



Provided Courtesy of Barlean's Organic Oils

Reprinted with permission from  
Health Perspectives Publishing

[www.barleans.com](http://www.barleans.com)