

WOMEN'S healthsource



Soccer athlete Jaclyn McGlone is back on the field after an unexpected heart attack. Turn to page 4 to read her story.

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Main Line Health®

When It's a Stroke, Time Is of the Essence

It was the worst headache of Elizabeth Croner's life, or so she thought. But at Bryn Mawr Hospital's highly specialized Neurovascular Lab, Croner learned that it was something more serious—a brain aneurysm, which is a life-threatening type of stroke. After Croner was rushed in from Paoli Hospital's Emergency Department, neurointerventionalist Grahame Gould, MD, performed an endovascular embolization, a nonsurgical procedure that uses coils to control the burst blood vessel. Today, Croner has no physical or cognitive effects from the experience.

What contributed to this positive outcome? A crucial factor was time. Because Croner's family took her to the ER immediately, she received fast treatment. Unfortunately, most stroke victims—78 percent—don't seek help quickly enough.

"Time is brain, so lost time is lost brain," Dr. Gould says. "Be vigilant about any symptoms of stroke, even symptoms that come and go."

In Croner's case, her stroke involved a vessel bleeding, which caused pain. However, the majority of strokes are ischemic, which means a clot cuts off blood flow to the brain. This is usually painless. That's why it's important to pay attention to symptoms;

with ischemic stroke, being treated within a three-hour "golden window" minimizes damage to the brain. Use the mnemonic FAST to know what to look for:

- **F**ace drooping
- **A**rm weakness
- **S**peech difficulty
- **T**ime to call 911

A drug called tissue plasminogen activator (tPA) has been proven effective when used in the golden window—the earlier, the better. "It contributes to 'chewing up' blood clots, which lessens poor neurologic outcomes," Dr. Gould says.

Of course, the best way to manage a stroke is to prevent it. Eating a heart-healthy diet; exercising regularly; keeping blood pressure, blood sugar, and cholesterol in check; and undergoing screenings if you have a family history of stroke can all help. ●



Know the Facts

Main Line Health urges you to recognize the symptoms of a stroke. Find a doctor and learn more about risk factors at mainlinehealth.org/stroke.



Farro with Walnut Pesto and Lacinato Kale

For more bright and healthy recipes like this one, visit blog.mainlinehealth.org/community and click on "Recipes."

- 4 cups water
- 2 cups farro
- 1 cup baby arugula
- 1 cup fresh basil leaves
- 2 cloves garlic
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup walnuts
- 1 lemon, juiced
- 1 tsp. lemon zest
- 2 cups lacinato kale, chopped
- 1 cup grape tomatoes, halved

1. Combine farro and water in a medium-sized saucepan. Bring to a boil, then cover and simmer for 20 to 25 minutes. Drain.
2. Meanwhile, in a food processor, combine the arugula, basil, garlic, oil, walnuts, lemon juice, and zest. Puree, thinning with water to desired consistency. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Toss the farro with the pesto, kale, and tomatoes. Serve warm or cold.

HOW TO SPOT A STROKE

FAST



Ask the person to smile. Does one side of his or her **FACE** droop?



Ask the person to raise his or her **ARMS**. Does one arm hang lower?



Does the person's **SPEECH** sound labored or slurred?



TIME is crucial. If you suspect a stroke, call 911 immediately.