



## DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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### **Learn about stroke awareness and prevention during Stroke Awareness Month in May**

*Stroke is a leading cause of adult disability and the fifth most common cause of death in the U.S., according to the CDC*

HONOLULU – In observance of National Stroke Awareness Month in May, the Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) Developmental Disabilities Division, through its Neurotrauma Supports program, will host a community health fair on Saturday, May 26, 2018, at Kahala Mall (near Macy's) from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The health fair will feature blood pressure screenings, information about strokes, risk factors and prevention measures, and offer available resources for stroke survivors and their family members. Participating organizations include: DOH Public Health Nursing, The Queen's Medical Center, Hawaii Medical Service Association, Kaiser Permanente Hawai'i, and American Heart Association.

A stroke occurs when blood flow through an artery to the brain is cut off either by a blockage or because the artery ruptures and bleeds into the brain tissue. Strokes are a serious medical emergency and must be treated immediately.

DOH reminds people in the event of a stroke, to remember the acronym "**F.A.S.T.**" because every second counts:

- **F – Face drooping.** Is one side of the person's face drooping or numb? When he or she smiles, is the smile uneven?
- **A – Arm weakness.** Is the person experiencing weakness or numbness in one arm? Have the person raise both arms. Does one of the arms drift downward?
- **S – Speech difficulty.** Is the person's speech suddenly slurred or hard to understand? Is he or she unable to speak? Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence. Can he or she repeat it back?
- **T – Time to call 9-1-1.** If any of these symptoms are present, dial 9-1-1 immediately. Check the time so you can report when the symptoms began.

"Recognizing the signs of a stroke is just as important as teaching your family CPR or what to do when there is a fire," said Wendie Lino from DOH's Developmental Disabilities Division. "The sooner someone can spot a stroke and call 9-1-1, the better chance the victim has of getting to a hospital quickly for treatment and preventing a long-term disability."

Living a healthy lifestyle, being physically active, eating more fruits and vegetables and foods low in sodium and salt, maintaining a healthy weight, and avoiding smoking can help to reduce the chances of having a stroke. Properly managing certain medical conditions such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease and diabetes also can lower the risk of stroke.

“There is no such thing as being too young to have a stroke. Many people think of strokes as a disease affecting the elderly, but it can happen to anyone at any time, even very young people,” Lino said.

To learn the signs of a stroke or heart attack, go to <http://health.hawaii.gov/heart-disease-stroke/home/stroke/> or for more information on stroke, visit the Centers For Disease Control and Prevention website at <https://www.cdc.gov/stroke/>.

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