

BOOK REVIEW



STROKE – GUIDEBOOK FOR PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES, by Vida Demarin. Belupo, Koprivnica, 2001, 69 pages. ISBN 953-96186-7-3; UDC 616.831-005.1

The book entitled *Stroke - guidebook for patients and their families*, presenting an important issue such as stroke for the first time in a way close and comprehensible to the people without any medical education, is a real news in the Croatian medical literature. However, the book will certainly be of great use in daily work of the physicians, nurses and other medical personnel.

The book has 69 pages divided into the following chapters: Introduction, What's a stroke, Symptoms of stroke, Stroke therapy, Prevention of stroke, Consequences of stroke, Recovery, Role of the patient suffering from stroke in recovery, and Role of family members in stroke patient's care and recovery. The format of the book is very practical and convenient.

The first chapter, Introduction, presents the basic facts about stroke, underlying the need of accepting stroke as an emergency, and especially that the book is primarily intended for patients who have suffered a stroke as well as for their family members.

The second chapter, What's a stroke, describes differences in the etiology of stroke, and particular types of stroke and transient ischemic attacks (TIAs) in a way comprehensible to the people without medical education.

The chapter entitled Symptoms of stroke describes major symptoms of the disease, while the chapter Stroke therapy presents the possibilities of stroke treatment available. Special attention is paid to hospital care.

The chapter entitled Prevention of stroke presents risk factors for stroke (elevated blood pressure, cardiac diseases and atrial fibrillation, smoking, diabetes, high levels of cholesterol, alcoholism, overweight, physical inactivity, etc.), continuing with a review of primary prevention of stroke and illustrating the importance of a healthy lifestyle and eating habits. This is followed by a survey of secondary prevention, among other things presenting antiplatelet therapy and main principles of anticoagulation therapy in the prevention of stroke.

The next chapter, The consequences of stroke, elaborates lesions to the left cerebral hemisphere (speech, behavior) and right cerebral hemisphere (spatial perception, unilateral neglect, behavior) as well as changes in the control of behavior, memory disturbances and emotional instability that develop secondary to a stroke.

The chapter entitled Recovery presents current possibilities of rehabilitation after a stroke, accentuating the need of an early initiation of rehabilitation measures.

The chapter Role of the patient suffering from stroke in recovery, describes in detail all adjustments and accommodations that are required and very helpful in the post-stroke period. Necessary adjustments of home arrangement are mentioned and advice is given how to perform some routine activities in a new way, how to keep the body clean, how to put clothes on, or how to take food by oneself. Patients will also find advice on urination, defecation

and coordination of movements as well as on sexual function after a stroke.

The last chapter, Role of family members in stroke patient's care and recovery, offers advice and possibilities on what to do to make the patient's life as normal, functional and productive as possible.

The book Stroke - guidebook for patients and their families by Professor Vida Demarin is a very valuable book, as it is written in a way for the people without medical education, lay people, i.e. patients and their families, to understand it without much effort. For this reason, the

patients who have suffered a stroke, having found themselves in a new, specific situation, can look for answers to all sorts of questions arising from their new situation, in a single book. Yet, the book will certainly be of use to medical professionals as well, for giving answers to the patients' questions and advice how to organize the patient's life after having suffered a stroke in the best way possible.

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