

The newsletter of Age Concern Thurrock

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Every year, an estimated 150,000 people in the UK have a stroke. That's one person every five minutes. Stroke is the leading cause of severe disability and the biggest killer in the UK, after cancer and heart disease.

Why a stroke happens: – A stroke is a brain attack. It happens when the blood supply to a part of the brain is cut off by:

- A blockage – called an ischaemic stroke; or
- A bleed – called an haemorrhagic stroke.

When the blood supply is interrupted, the brain doesn't get the oxygen it needs and brain cells begin to shut down and die.

Common symptoms of a stroke

- Paralysis on one side of the body;
- Drooping and weakness of one side of the face;
- Communication problems; and
- Loss of sight or blurred vision.



You may be aware of an advert on the television in the past few weeks advertising the four simple things to look for if you suspect someone has had a stroke. Please remember them and act **FAST**

F – **Facial Weakness** - their face falling to one side. The mouth has dropped and the person cannot smile.

A – **Arm weakness** - can they raise both arms and keep them there?

S - **Speech problems** - Can they speak clearly so you understand what they say?

T - **Time** is important. **If the person cannot do one of the above things then dial 999 and ask for an ambulance.**

The sooner the patient is diagnosed and gets medical help the greater the chance of recovery. Prompt action can prevent further damage to the person's brain.

A group has recently formed in Thurrock, of which Age Concern Thurrock is a member, to bring together people to work on a strategy for prevention and management of strokes.

It is running a **Stroke Awareness Day** on **April 24th at the Beehive**. There will be two sessions, 10-1pm and 1-4pm. It will include a great deal of information on strokes, prevention and after-care. If you want to know more about this event please ring us on 01375 389872 or Jo Hall, the Stroke Prevention Officer, on 01375 652695

Thurrock Stroke Club is a social group for those who have had a stroke. It meets on alternate Tuesdays in Long Lane Leisure Hall. For more information contact Hilda Pursey on 01375 676688



The national **Stroke helpline** number is 0845 3033 100 (9am-5pm weekdays).

