Medtronic News

Many Underestimate Stroke, Would Miss Warning Signs Despite High Global Death Rate, Prevalence among Women

Covidien-World Stroke Organization Survey Shows Low Knowledge of Stroke Prevention, Treatment Options

Dublin, Ireland and Geneva – Oct. 22, 2014 – Despite its being the second leading cause of death worldwide, many people still do not recognize the threat stroke poses and the warning signs associated with it, according to a new public opinion study sponsored by Covidien and the World Stroke Organization (WSO).

The survey measured awareness of strokes and stroke prevention among adults aged 18 and older in the United States, Brazil, South Korea and Ireland. The findings indicate that while most respondents say they are knowledgeable about stroke, only about 20 percent realize that about 1 in 6 people will suffer a stroke. Additionally, only 1 in 10 understand that women are more likely than men to experience a stroke.

“Stroke affects one out of six people across the globe, so it is critical we underscore the risk and the steps people can take to prevent a stroke,” said Dr. Michael Tarnoff, global chief medical officer, Covidien. “Everyone can be powerful in saving a life if they know what do. These survey results identify a significant – but addressable -- gap in knowledge when it comes to stroke awareness.”

Additional overall findings of the survey include:

- Knowledge about risk factors is generally low: While about 1 in 4 people know smoking and high blood pressure are risk factors for stroke, only 1 in 10 knows unaided that it is important to manage one’s diabetes and weight.
- Knowledge of warning signs and symptoms of a stroke are similarly low: About 1 in 5 adults recognize slurred speech, facial or arm numbness, and headaches as warning signs and symptoms, but fewer than 1 in 10 are aware unaided that loss of balance or coordination, vision issues or confusion may be signaling a stroke.
- On the positive side, 9 out of 10 survey respondents know you should call emergency services and get someone suspected of having a stroke to the hospital immediately.

Covidien is collaborating with the WSO as a Platinum Sponsor of this year’sWorld Stroke Campaign. In addition to the survey, the company is highlighting its commitment to stroke patients and raising consumer awareness through a new global campaign launching on World Stroke Day, Oct. 29. The company’s “Take 2 … Tell 2” campaign focuses on what can be achieved in just 2 minutes – having every person take 2 minutes to raise their awareness about stroke and then telling two people about those signs.

“More than 17 million people suffer a stroke every year, and that’s why we’re calling for immediate, worldwide action to address the epidemic of stroke,” said Dr. Stephen Davis, president, World Stroke Organization. “Preventative care and knowledge are key tools to combatting the impact of stroke, and we are proud to have Covidien as a partner to champion this cause.”

Participants across the globe are encouraged to visitwww.take2forstroke.com to learn more about stroke and inspire others to do the same. Using the hashtag #take2forstroke, people can share their stroke-related story via video and photographs on their favorite social media sites.

The “Take 2 … Tell 2” campaign will anchor Covidien-sponsored events held on World Stroke Day in four global markets: New York City, U.S.; São Paulo, Brazil; Seoul, S. Korea and Dublin, Ireland;. These events will include free blood pressure screenings, educational materials and wellness information, giveaways and special guests.

“Stroke claims a life every six seconds, but it is still not well understood, highlighting the need to give this condition a greater voice,” added Tarnoff. “Our ‘Take 2 ... Tell 2’ initiative is focused on helping people understand how many of their family and friends may be affected by stroke and educating them to prevent future strokes, which can potentially save lives.”

As the World Stroke Campaign lead sponsor, Covidien is supporting a range of global WSO initiatives to share educational materials and other awareness-focused information about stroke prevention and treatment. The campaign includes websites and a variety of supporting materials designed to drive greater awareness of stroke, risk factors, prevention and treatment options.

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Research Method

This World Stroke Day Study was conducted within the metropolitan areas of four major world cities – New York City, São Paulo, Dublin and Seoul – between Oct. 2 and 9, 2014, among 1,418 adults aged 18 and over (at least 350 per metropolitan area). In addition, for comparison purposes, at least 500 interviews among adults living in each country (United States, Brazil, Ireland and South Korea) were completed between Oct. 6 and 13, 2014. This online survey was sponsored by Covidien and conducted by APCO Insight, an international opinion research consultancy. Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in an opt-in survey panel. The data have been weighted to reflect the demographic composition of adults in each of the metropolitan areas or countries as appropriate.

About Covidien

Covidien is a global health care leader that understands the challenges faced by providers and their patients and works to address them with innovative medical technology solutions and patient care products. Inspired by patients and caregivers, Covidien's team of dedicated professionals is privileged to help save and improve lives around the world. With more than 38,000 employees, Covidien operates in 150-plus countries and had 2013 revenue of $10.2 billion. To learn more about our business visit www.covidien.com or connect *with us on Twitter.*

About the World Stroke Organization

The World Stroke Organization (WSO) was established in October 2006. WSO's mission is to reduce the global burden of stroke through prevention, treatment and long-term care. With individual and organizational members worldwide, including stroke support groups, WSO is the global voice for stroke. WSO is the only international stroke NGO in official relations with the World Health Organization (WHO). For more information, go to www.world-stroke.org.

About "Take 2 … Tell 2"

Take 2 … Tell 2 is a global stroke awareness campaign that focuses on the difference 2 minutes can make when it comes to stroke. Whether it's taking the time to learn about prevention, testing, the warning signs or treatment, or sharing your story about stroke, everyone has 2 minutes to educate themselves or others about stroke. To share your stroke story and learn more about how you can Take 2 … Tell 2, visit www.take2forstroke.com.

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