

127 Stroke Telemedicine

July 7, 2008

Intro: When it comes to stroke, time is brain. That's because you only have a three hour window after symptoms start to receive medication that's known to help. But people living in small towns may not have access to this medication, because their hospitals may not have staff trained to administer it. Mayo Clinic is hoping to change that. They're studying telemedicine to help stroke victims in rural hospitals get the treatment they need.

Video

Total running time 1:35

CG :16 to :23
Vivien Williams
Reporting

Audio

A.J. BATES REMEMBERS WHEN THE STROKE HIT. A CLOT CUT OFF BLOOD SUPPLY TO HER BRAIN. "I COULDN'T TALK. I COULDN'T WRITE IN CURSIVE. " A.J.'S LOCAL HOSPITAL IS WELL STAFFED, BUT IT DOESN'T HAVE DOCTORS TRAINED TO USE THE CLOT-BUSTING DRUG CALLED T.P.A. "BUT A.J. DID GET THE TREATMENT SHE NEEDED THANKS TO TECHNOLOGY THAT GAVE HER ACCESS TO MAYO CLINIC STROKE SPECIALISTS 200 MILES AWAY."

“I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU MIGHT
HAVE SOME TROUBLE
EXPRESSING YOURSELF.”
TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION
ALLOWS DR. BART
DEMAERSCHALK TO TALK TO AND
EVALUATE PATIENTS.

“TOUCH YOUR FINGER THEN YOUR
NOSE AND GO BACK AND FORTH.”
HE CAN ALSO CONSULT WITH
PHYSICIANS IN THE E.R.

“WE SENT HIM YOUR CAT SCANS
SO HE CAN LOOK AT THE SAME
IMAGES WE DID.”

DR. DEMAERSCHALK AND HIS
TEAM ARE STUDYING THIS
TECHNOLOGY TO SEE IF IT'S
BETTER THAN CONSULTING WITH
E.R. PHYSICIANS ON THE PHONE.
THIS IS THEIR HYPOTHESIS:

“THE TWO-WAY AUDIO/VIDEO
SYSTEM IS GOING TO BE BETTER
IN MAKING DECISIONS REGARDING

CG :51 to :57

Bart Demaerschalk, M.D
Mayo Clinic neurologist

THE ELIGIBILITY FOR THESE CLOT-BUSTING DRUGS.”

DECIDING WHO GETS TPA CAN BE TRICKY. THAT’S BECAUSE TPA IS EFFECTIVE, BUT VERY RISKY. IF THE DRUG IS GIVEN MORE THAN THREE HOURS AFTER SYMPTOMS START, PATIENTS ARE AT RISK OF BLEEDING IN THE BRAIN. ACCESS TO STROKE EXPERTS MAY HELP E.R. DOCTORS BE SURE THEY’RE GIVING PATIENTS THE RIGHT TREATMENT.

CG 1:16 to 1:19

**Michael Ward, M.D.
Emergency Room Director**

“IT ALLOWS US TO HAVE THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF CARE AVAILABLE.”

CG 1:19 to 1:27

**A.J. Bates
Had stroke**

“TO HAVE SOMEONE LIKE THAT ON YOUR SIDE AND TO KNOW THAT THEY’RE THERE JUST BY TURNING ON THE TV, THE VIDEO IS AMAZING.”

FOR MEDICAL EDGE, I’M VIVIEN WILLIAMS.

Anchor tag:

The hospital in this story is in Kingman, Arizona. The Mayo Clinic site is located in Phoenix.

Dr. Demaerschalk says if the study proves that telemedicine helps stroke victims, he will work to expanding the program nationwide.

And again, time is brain, if you experience sudden onset of numbness or weakness on one side of your body, unexplained severe headache, visual disturbances or the inability to communicate, call 911 and get to a stroke center fast.

For more information, visit our Website at...**[STATIONS: Per the licensing agreement, please provide a link from your station's website to <http://www.mayoclinic.org> or voice tag "mayoclinic.org" for more information.]**