

Jan. 2004

Physician Forum

New developments in stroke care

New Therapies

In June 1996, the FDA approved intravenous tissue plasminogen activator as the first therapy proven effective for the treatment of acute stroke if administered within three hours of onset. Lack of public awareness and unavailability of organized acute stroke treatment programs have been significant barriers in offering thrombolytic therapy nationally and particularly in Kentucky.

Other promising investigational therapies include intra-arterial administration of thrombolytic drugs, neuroprotective drugs, anti-glycoprotein IIb/IIIa antagonist medications (including Reopro), catheter-based methods of intra-arterial clot disintegration and combination therapies. Intra-arterial thrombolytic therapy was recently proven effective for treatment of middle cerebral artery occlusion within 6 hours of stroke onset. Important non-pharmacological therapies proven effective in improving outcomes following strokes have included having a stroke team and a stroke unit.

Stroke Team

A multidisciplinary formal stroke team has been established at the Jewish Hospital Emergency Stroke Center. Members of the team include stroke neurologists, neuro-interventionalists, research

coordinators, a stroke nurse coordinator and nursing managers, as well as therapists from Frazier Rehab Institute. Effective February 9, 2004, the stroke team will offer 24-hour-a-

day, 365-day-a-year coverage for acute stroke treatment, including administration of intravenous and intra-arterial thrombolytic therapy.

A stroke neurologist will be on call 24-hours-a-day and can be reached by calling the Jewish Hospital Emergency Department at (502) 587-4421. The

neurologists on the stroke team are James Gebel, M.D., Ulises Nobo, M.D., and Kerri Rimmel, M.D.

The team will also offer the opportunity for patient enrollment into industry-sponsored and NIH-sponsored acute stroke and stroke prevention clinical trials. Formal stroke care and triaging

pathways have been developed to encourage consistent delivery of care meeting American Heart Association guidelines and meeting JCAHO stroke center requirements. The stroke team will also spearhead efforts at public education and awareness in conjunction with regional chapters of the National Stroke Association and Operation Stroke. Stroke team consultations are now available for ischemic or hemorrhagic stroke patients.

For further information about the Jewish Hospital Emergency Stroke Center and stroke team, call James Gebel, M.D., at (502) 583-2262.



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