



North Central District Health Department

- Enfield—31 North Main Street, Enfield, CT 06082 * (860) 745-0383 Fax (860) 745-3188
- Vernon—375 Hartford Turnpike, Room 120, Vernon, CT 06066 * (860) 872-1501 Fax (860) 872 1531
- Windham—Town Hall, 979 Main Street, Willimantic, CT 06226 * (860) 465-3033 Fax (860) 465-3034
- Stafford—Town Hall, 1 Main Street, Stafford Springs, CT 06076 * (860) 684-5609 Fax (860) 684-1768

Patrice A. Sulik, MPH, R.S.
Director of Health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: APRIL 27, 2016

CONTACT: PATRICE SULIK, 860-745-0383

NCDHD Encourages Residents to Learn the Facts About Stroke *May is Stroke Awareness Month*

May is Stroke Awareness Month. Stroke kills almost 130,000 people a year. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), about 800,000 people in the United States have a stroke every year. It is the fifth leading cause of death, behind heart disease, cancer, chronic lower respiratory disease, and accidents and the leading cause of adult disability in the United States. The North Central District Health Department (NCDHD) encourages residents to learn the facts about stroke.

Stroke is a type of cardiovascular disease. It occurs when the blood supply to part of the brain is blocked or when a blood vessel in the brain bursts. When this happens, part of the brain cannot get the blood (and oxygen) it needs, so the brain gets damaged or starts to die. There are two types of stroke, ischemic stroke and hemorrhagic stroke. Ischemic stroke occurs when blood clots or other particles block the blood vessels to the brain. A hemorrhagic stroke occurs when a blood vessel bursts in the brain.

“You can help prevent strokes by making healthy lifestyle changes,” said Patrice Sulik, NCDHD Director of Health. “These changes include eating a healthy diet and getting enough exercise.”

Other healthy lifestyle behaviors includes maintaining a healthy weight, avoiding tobacco products, and limiting alcohol use.

NCDHD board member, Trish Vayda of Windsor Locks, states “Residents should become knowledgeable about the stroke symptoms. If you are aware of the symptoms, you are more likely to seek immediate medical care, which can make a difference in the treatment.”

Signs and symptoms for both men and women include:

- Sudden numbness or weakness in the face, arm, or leg, especially on one side of the body.
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking, or difficulty understanding speech.
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes.
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance, or lack of coordination.
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause.

Common medical conditions such as previous stroke or transient ischemic attack, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease, diabetes, or sickle cell disease, can increase your risk of stroke. There are some risk factors that cannot be controlled or changed, such as age, gender, heredity, and race.

For more information on stroke prevention and treatment, visit the CDC website at www.cdc.gov.

###

About NCDHD

The North Central District Health Department (NCDHD) serves the communities of Enfield, East Windsor, Ellington, Stafford, Suffield, Vernon, Windham, and Windsor Locks. NCDHD is a full-time public health department with a full-time staff funded by its member towns and an annual per

capita grant from the Connecticut State Department of Public Health. NCDHD provides professional public health services in the areas of health education and disease prevention, environmental health and emergency preparedness. The mission of NCDHD is to prevent disease, injury, and disability by promoting and protecting the health and well-being of the public and our environment.

For more information about NCDHD visit www.ncdhd.org.