



NEWS

ANTELOPE VALLEY'S
HEALTHCARE
NEWS RESOURCE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ANTELOPE VALLEY HOSPITAL IS NOW A PRIMARY STROKE CENTER

(LANCASTER, CA—February 15, 2012) — On Monday, February 13, 2012, Antelope Valley Hospital (AVH) attained advanced certification by The Joint Commission as a Certified Primary Stroke Center. This signifies that AVH provides the most advanced stroke care and ensures a team of specialized stroke neurologists and nurses are available at all times.

Stroke is the third leading cause of death and the leading cause of disability among adults in the United States. The Joint Commission created the Primary Stroke Center Certification Program in 2003 to address this important health issue. Because of its status as the leader of accreditation and certification of healthcare organizations throughout the country, The Joint Commission's certification process and standards are used at numerous hospitals in the U.S. Primary Stroke Centers use an evidence-based, standardized method of delivering care, customize treatment and intervention to the patient's needs and share information across providers to provide the best care possible.

Education plays a vital role in improving outcomes for stroke patients. Eating a healthy diet, exercising and controlling blood pressure are good habits that can reduce a person's risk of stroke. It is equally important to know and be able to recognize the symptoms of a stroke, which include:

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

(-more-)

If you experience any of these symptoms or witness someone experiencing them, note the time of the first symptom and call 9-1-1 immediately. This information is important to the healthcare provider and can affect treatment decisions.

Having a local Certified Primary Stroke Center provides numerous benefits to the Antelope Valley community, and more lives will be saved because patients can be treated quickly after a stroke occurs. Prior to AVH's accreditation, the nearest Primary Stroke Center for Antelope Valley residents was located nearly 50 miles away. This distinction is another step in Antelope Valley Hospital's goal of establishing Centers of Excellence in Oncology, Orthopedics, Cardiology, Pediatrics, Trauma and Neurology with Stroke Certification.

"Because more than 140,000 people die each year from stroke in the United States, we felt it was necessary for the community to have access to a local Primary Stroke Center," says Edward Mirzabegian, Antelope Valley Hospital Chief Executive Officer. "We are pleased to have The Joint Commission recognize our commitment to providing the best possible care to our patients and our community," says Mirzabegian.

About Antelope Valley Hospital

Celebrating more than 50 years of caring for the community, Antelope Valley Hospital, a facility of Antelope Valley Healthcare District, is a non-profit, 420-bed hospital that was founded in 1955. The hospital is dedicated to providing quality care and services to everyone in the Antelope Valley. AV Hospital is located at 1600 West Avenue J in Lancaster, California. For further information, please visit www.avhospital.org or call (661) 949-5000.

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