

March is National Nutrition Month

Put Your Best Fork Forward

March is National Nutrition Month! It is a nutrition education and information campaign created annually by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

Eating a healthy diet and being physically active can reduce your risk of having another stroke. Eating a diet low in fat, salt and high in fruits and vegetables can reduce the risk factors for another stroke like high cholesterol, high blood pressure, being overweight and diabetes.

This year's campaign focuses on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits. The theme "Put Your Best Fork Forward" serves as a reminder that each one of us holds the tool to make healthier food choices. To learn more about healthy eating visit the [American Academy of Dietetics and Nutrition](http://www.dietitians.org).

Try this healthy and delicious popcorn next time you have movie night at home.

Ingredients

- 4 cups air-popped popcorn
- 1 tablespoon melted margarine
- 1 teaspoon chili powder and a dash of garlic powder

Directions: Mix popcorn and margarine in bowl, mix seasonings and sprinkle over popcorn. Mix well and enjoy the movie.



Advocacy

State News (Illinois)



State lawmaker recently passed the Employee Sick Leave Act, which allows family caregivers to use up to half of their sick leave benefits at work to take time off for a family member illness, injury or medical appointment. AARP Illinois was the leading advocate for the new law, which took effect January 1, 2017.

More than 1.5 million Illinoisans are family caregivers, and many struggle to balance their paid work with the responsibilities of caring for a sick parent,

spouse, sibling or child. Without this law, some had to make tough choices such as whether to cut back on work hours or quit their jobs altogether to be able to care for their loved ones. "Businesses will also benefit," said Bob Gallo, AARP state director. "This law is likely to improve employee morale by reducing stress and offering support and flexibility for family caregivers". [To learn more visit aarp.org](http://aarp.org)

Caregiver Story

Donna Kruse



Stroke has touched so many lives around me. Both of my parents suffered strokes. My father was 52 when he had a major heart attack at work. He survived the heart attack but proceeded to have a severe stroke while still in the hospital recovering from his heart attack which left him with incomprehensible speech and left arm/leg paralysis. I felt anger and disbelief when I saw my father lying in the hospital bed unable to speak and move (he was always so active). Two days after the stroke (still in the hospital) he died. I was only 19 years old at the time and in complete shock.

Eight years after my father's stroke, my mother suffered a stroke in her 50's. She had prior TIAs but was not aggressively treated and one morning woke up with right sided weakness and facial droop (which she "hid" for several hours). She went through acute rehab and did regain a great deal of her strength but did occasionally experience episodes of inappropriate crying or laughter. Although not fatal, she was left with disabilities. She later died of unrelated circumstances at the age of 64.

Watching my mother go through rehab and depression and wondering if things would have been different if she told someone sooner or if life style changes were addressed aggressively when she experienced her TIA made me think about my life choices and ultimately a career in nursing. After years of working as a nurse in the intensive care unit, I accepted the position in 2015 as the Stroke Coordinator at Advocate Sherman Hospital. With my family history, seeing colleagues who have experienced stroke at such a young age and my daughter's friend who experienced an ischemic stroke at the beginning of 8th grade makes me work even harder to get the message out about stroke.

I have been assisting the SSEEO Stroke Survivor2Survivor (SS2S) telephone support team at Advocate Sherman Hospital by getting patients registered for the program, offering resources and encouraging them to attend our stroke support group. I presented my stroke story along with "What is a Stroke" at SSEEO's regional stroke event held on World Stroke day in 2016.

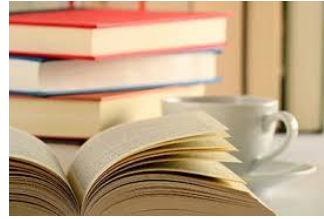
Please help us educate the community on stroke signs and symptoms and the urgency to seek medical treatment!! It breaks my heart to see patients that present to the hospital outside a treatment window because they waited to see if the symptoms improve.

Book Recommendation

The Word Escapes Me: Voices of Aphasia

Ellayne Ganzfried and Mona Greenfield

A loss for words...something we all have experienced. Imagine living each day trying to find the words, understand what is being said, having trouble reading and writing. Welcome to the world of aphasia. This book provides much needed insight into this devastating communication disorder through the eyes of clinicians, caregivers and persons with aphasia.



Increase your knowledge of aphasia and learn strategies to increase public awareness of aphasia. Explore innovative approaches to aphasia rehabilitation and groups. Read personal and candid stories of frustration, courage, hope, love and acceptance. Words can escape a person but compassion, respect and humor will always remain.

To join this on-line book club discussion [visit the National Aphasia Association](#).

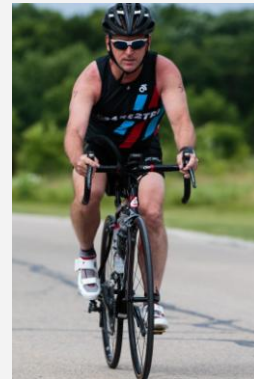
Resources

Dare2tri

For stroke survivors and athletes like Jeff Rizner, Dare2tri Paratriathlon Club has served as an essential resource in the recovery process.

"After my stroke in 2001, it took me four months to walk again and seven months to walk without a cane and a brace," Rizner said. "It was at that time I decided to push harder to learn to run again and eventually sign up for my first 5K in 2002. That first race helped me see the benefit in sports, and eventually I encountered Dare2tri in 2015 when I was seeking to improve my swimming. A year later I participated in my first Half Ironman and completed a 1.2-mile swim. I would never have been able to do that without Dare2tri."

Dare2tri is an Illinois-based 501(c)3 non-for-profit organization with the mission to positively impact the lives of athletes with physical disabilities and visual impairments by developing their skills in paratriathlon. Dare2tri empowers individuals with disabilities and gives them the opportunity to be physically active, engaged with their community, and helps them set and reach goals. Dare2tri changes lives by boosting individuals' self-esteem, confidence, and self-worth.



Jeff Rizner
photo courtesy
of Ali Engin

Since 2011, Dare2tri has worked with athletes of all ability levels from beginner to elite by serving youth, adults, and injured service members who have a physical

disability such as amputation, spinal cord injury, stroke, spina bifida, cerebral palsy, and those with visual impairments and blindness.

"Dare2tri offers training, clinics and camps for all levels of individuals with a variety of disabilities" Rizner said. "The coaching and support offered by Dare2tri helps athletes find ways to adapt and achieve their own goals. Dare2tri has given me the courage to try something new and accomplish another goal for myself."

Dare2tri hosts weekly practices, and seasonal clinics and camps for people of all ability levels. To learn how to join and participate in upcoming Dare2tri events, visit: www.dare2tri.org or call (312) 967-9874.

SSEEO is excited to partner with Dare2tri for the upcoming regional event May 4th being held at Advocate Good Samaritan Hospital.



Regional Event

Feeling Good from Your Head to Your Feet

May 4th, 2017

Location: Advocate Good Samaritan Wellness Center - Downers Grove, IL

SSEEO's 5th Annual Walk/Run for Stroke

May 6th, 2017

Location: Village Park in Winthrop Harbor, IL

Click here for the event details: [**5th Annual 5k/10k Walk/Run for Stroke**](#)

Registration is available on-line at

[**sseeo.org**](http://sseeo.org).

SSEEO

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**Together WE can
make a
difference.**

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