

Medical terms

You May Hear

Aneurysm: A dilatation of a blood vessel, usually an artery

Anticoagulation Therapy/Antiplatelet Therapy: Medication that is required to prevent certain blood cells (platelets) from sticking together, reducing the chances of a clot

Assistive Devices: An equipment used to assist function or movement. Eg: walker, rolling commode etc.

Atrial Fibrillation: Irregular and rapid heart rhythm

Aphasia: A communication disorder caused by brain damage leading to difficulty understanding or communicating language or both

Apraxia: A difficulty initiating and performing purposeful movements without strength, coordination, sensation and attention being affected. Affects both weak and unaffected arms and/or legs

Arteriovenous Malformation (AVM): Tangled arteries or veins which occur during fetal development. This can eventually rupture leading to a bleed in the brain

Aspiration: Leaking of food, liquid, saliva into airways

Ataxia: Uncoordinated movement patterns which can affect walking, posture and purposeful movements

Atherosclerosis: Thickening of the walls of the arteries due to plaque formation

Attention Disorders: Difficulty paying attention to specific tasks, this could affect sustained attention (focusing on one task), divided attention (focusing on two tasks at one time), alternating attention (switching between tasks)

Balance: A complex relationship of various body systems working to keep the body upright and steady despite environmental factors

Botox: Is a neurotoxic protein which can be injected into a muscle in order to paralyze it. The paralysis from botox does wear off over time. In the neuro world, botox is often utilized to relax or paralyze muscles which may have too much tone or tightness after an injury such as a stroke. The goal is to assist the individual with regaining some function, decreasing pain or spasms and or decreasing stiffness/tightness

Brace: A device fitted to the arm, hand, leg or foot for positioning for tone management, function and/or skin/pressure relief

Brain Attack: Also used to describe a stroke

Carotid Doppler: An Ultrasound of two of the major arteries that transport blood to the brain (the carotid arteries)

Cerebral Embolus: These are traveling bits of matter (fat, air or plaque) formed elsewhere that are released into the bloodstream and

travel to blood vessels in the brain producing occlusion

Cerebral Hemorrhage: Abnormal bleeding into areas of brain

Cerebral Thrombosis: A blockage of a blood vessel in the brain, caused by buildup of plaque that eventually blocks blood from flowing through

Cognition: The mental action of acquiring, storing and utilizing knowledge through thoughts, experiences and our senses

Coordination: The ability of various body structures to move smoothly and accurately

CT Scan: Imaging procedure more detailed than XRAYs depicting detailed images of various parts of the body

Dysarthria: Difficulty with speech production, articulation, phonation

Dysphagia: Inability or difficulty swallowing

Emotional Lability: Unstable or changeable emotional state, eg changing from laughing to crying suddenly

Hemiparesis: Partial paralysis affecting one half of the body

Hemiplegia: Complete paralysis of one half of the body

Homonymous Hemianopsia: Loss of vision in the same side of the visual field in each eye

Patent Foramen Ovale: A hole between the left and right upper chambers of the heart. Present at birth, it normally closes shortly after birth, but remains open in 25-30% of the population. A blood clot can travel from the right side to the left side of the heart via a PFO, and from there, go up to the brain and cause a stroke. Evaluation for PFO is standard part of a stroke workup

PEG tube: Percutaneous Enterogastric tube, a feeding tube that is placed under sedation through the abdominal wall and into the stomach. PEG tubes can stay in a person's body for years and are relatively easy to care for. They are removable, so if the swallowing mechanism improves, they can be taken out!
Emotional Lability: Unstable or changeable emotional state, e.g., changing from laughing to crying suddenly

Pusher Syndrome: A motor pattern characterized when the intact/unaffected arm and/or leg actively pushes the body towards the unaffected side causing a lean towards the affected side, this is increased with all movement and transfers

Memory Disorders: A difficulty or inability to store and recall experiences. (Immediate recall, short term memory and long-term memory)

MRI: Imaging technique more detailed to CT scan used for analyzing various parts of the body

Muscle Tone:

- **Flaccidity:** Reduced or absent muscle tone

- **Spasticity:** Increase in muscle tone

Neuroplasticity: The ability of the nervous system to learn new things and create new pathways. In stroke rehabilitation, can mean that areas of the brain take on a function previously executed by the infarcted area

Perseveration: Continued repetition of words or actions

Shoulder Hand Syndrome: Pain in the shoulder, arm and hand on the weaker side, often caused by abnormal processing of touch and pain signals on the affected side

Synergy: After a stroke one may experience movements occurring together in a pattern instead of individually. For example, someone may try to move their shoulder after a stroke and may experience their elbow, wrist and hand moving as well in a combined pattern or 'synergistic movement

Transient Ischemic Attack: Temporary interruption of blood supply to the brain with neurological deficits lasting few minutes to hours, but not more than 24 hours

Tissue Plasminogen Activator: "Clot buster" Medication administered for a stroke, when confirmed via imaging, caused by a clot

Unilateral neglect: Inability to register information from one side on the body (usually Left side)

Visual Neglect: Reduced awareness to one side of the body and environment

Did we miss something? Let us know Lumive@lumivecare.com