



STOPPING A **STROKE** IN ITS TRACKS

GARY HALEY RECEIVED LIFESAVING TREATMENT IN TIME THANKS TO HIS KNOWLEDGE OF STROKE SYMPTOMS.

Taking quick action helped Gary Haley (second from left) survive a stroke to be with family members (from left) Grace, Colin, Anne Marie and Aidan.

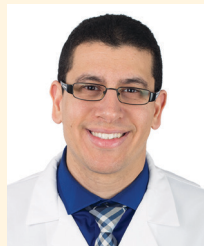
On December 4, 2022, Gary Haley was home after a physically demanding workday at Cushman & Wakefield/UBS, where he is an engineer. He was about to start decorating the house for Christmas when he realized something was wrong.

“Suddenly I had problems walking on my right side,” says Gary, age 49. “I had no control of my arm or hand.” Gary then noticed that his right leg was dragging, and he knew he had to get to the hospital immediately. He quickly went to Montefiore Nyack Hospital, which was a key factor in Gary’s successful treatment, according to Inna Bulaevsky, DO, the attending physician who treated him in the hospital’s Emergency Department (ED).

“Getting to the hospital as soon as a person realizes they may be having a stroke is critical,” Dr. Bulaevsky says. “If you feel a sudden weakness or loss of sensation in your face, arm or leg, or have sudden difficulty with speech, balance or coordination, you need to call 911. These are possible signs of a stroke, and you need to be evaluated in the ED right away.”

STROKE TREATMENT

A person who comes to the ED with a possible stroke is immediately taken for a CT (computed tomography) scan to check for bleeding in the brain. “There are two types of stroke,” Dr. Bulaevsky says. “The most common type involves a clot that impedes blood flow to the brain, known as an ischemic stroke.



ANDREW ERIAN, MD

The other type is a hemorrhagic stroke, which involves bleeding in the brain. We need to know which type it is in order to know

how to treat it.”

Gary’s CT showed that he had an ischemic stroke, and he was started on a medication called tenecteplase (TNK) to dissolve the clot and allow blood flow to return to the brain. In most cases, stroke patients should receive TNK or another common treatment known as tissue plasminogen activator (tPA) within three hours of the start of the stroke in order for the medications to be effective, Dr. Bulaevsky says.

“The longer an area of the brain goes without blood, the greater the chances that the area will be damaged—and that the damage could be permanent,” says Andrew Erian, MD, a neurologist at Highland Medical, Rockland Neurological Associates, in West Nyack, and co-director of the Stroke Committee at Montefiore Nyack Hospital.

Within 45 minutes to an hour of receiving treatment, Gary started to feel better. He was transferred to the intensive care unit to be monitored and stayed for three nights. He has been receiving physical therapy and is back at work.

STROKE RECOVERY

“Recovery from a stroke depends on its severity and the type of symptoms a person has,” Dr. Erian says. “Most people can expect to do intensive rehabilitation for several months, which can include physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy, to get the brain to re-form the connections that were damaged by the stroke.”

A person recovering from a stroke also needs what Dr. Erian calls a “tune-up process”—taking measures such as getting their blood pressure, cholesterol and diabetes under control, quitting smoking and being examined by other specialists. “These are all steps that decrease the risk

B.E. F.A.S.T. SIGNS OF STROKE ARE KEY

The faster you get to the Emergency Department during or after a stroke, the better your chances for successful treatment. An easy way to identify key signs of a stroke is to remember the acronym B.E. F.A.S.T.:



B BALANCE: Sudden trouble with balance or coordination



E EYES: Change in vision



F FACE: Drooping or numbness



A ARM: No control; weakness or numbness



S SPEECH: Change in speech or ability to talk clearly



T TIME: Is brain, meaning fast action reduces risks. Call 911.

of a person having another stroke and increase the chances of a good recovery,” he says.

Dr. Bulaevsky says Gary’s instinct to get to the hospital as soon as he recognized his symptoms very well could have saved his life: “We were able to help Mr. Haley preserve his ability to work and take care of his family because he came in as soon as possible.”



To make an appointment with a board-certified neurologist at Highland Medical, P.C., call **866-550-HMPC (4672)**.