



The Stroke I.M.P.A.C.T. Study

NEWSLETTER

Issue 4

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Happy Valentine's Day

Don't Forget about your Caregivers!



February 14th is Valentine's Day—A day to celebrate love, honor connections, exchange gifts, eat chocolate, and send flowers and cards. Turn the tables on Valentine's Day and do something "caring" for your caregiver. These small gestures will surely send the message that you truly appreciate everything your caregiver does for you.

♥ **Create a homemade Valentine's Card:** Use construction paper and scissors to cut out hearts, glue the hearts to paper, create your own Valentine's message written in your own hand (use your weaker hand and don't worry about neatness). It's the effort and thought that matters.

♥ **Bake a batch of Valentine's cookies or a cake.** Decorate your baked goods with candy hearts or get artistic with frosting and pipe a Valentine's message to your caregiver.

♥ **Buy or pick your own flowers** and create a personalized arrangement for your caregiver.

♥ **Write a personalized letter** to your caregiver expressing your gratitude for all they do for you.

♥ **Make a handmade coupon** offering them a service that you can provide (ie. serving breakfast in bed, cleaning up after dinner, doing laundry, taking out the garbage, walking the dog, any task that you can do for them).

♥ **Make an exception on your diet and share a box of chocolates with your caregiver.** Buy an assortment box of candies and use your weak hand to make your selections from the box. While you're indulging yourself and your caregiver, why not open a bottle of champagne or wine and offer a special toast to your caregiver expressing your heartfelt appreciation for all they do for you.

**Cheers and
Happy Valentine's Day!!**



Improving Motor Performance Applying Constraint Therapy



**University of
South Carolina**



**University of
Florida**



**Colorado State
University**



Tips for Staying Healthy this Winter

- Don't smoke. Smoking can more than double your risk of stroke. Avoid secondhand smoke too.
- Eat a heart-healthy diet that includes plenty of fish, fruits, vegetables, beans, high-fiber grains and breads, and olive oil.
- Get regular exercise on most, preferably all, days of the week. Your doctor can suggest a safe level of exercise for you.
- Control your cholesterol and blood pressure. If you have diabetes, keep your blood sugar in your target range.
- Limit alcohol. Having more than 2 drinks a day increases the risk of stroke.
- Take a daily aspirin if your doctor advises it.
- Avoid getting sick. Get a flu shot every year.
- Go to all your medical appointments, and take your medications according to your physician's directions.

Your Home -- Your Training Lab

Look around your home. In every room you can find objects that can be put to therapeutic use. In The Stroke I.M.P.A.C.T. Study labs at UF, CSU and USC there are many high tech instruments and even more everyday objects that are used in CIMT training.

Checkers, dominos, cards and puzzles: These leisure activities can be found in most homes and can be therapeutic when played primarily with the more affected hand.

Laundry as therapy: Try smoothing out the freshly washed and dried clothing to reduce wrinkles before you fold.

While you're watching television: Use your remote control with your weaker hand. Go beyond channel changing; try resetting the color levels or programming the TV to go on or off automatically.

In the kitchen: Just about every task in the kitchen has therapeutic value. Washing vegetables, sorting beans, measuring ingredients, stirring, slicing, setting the table, clearing the table, loading and unloading the dishwasher....etc.

All of these suggestions are usual and customary activities and chores around the house that can help you get your more affected hand moving. We will explore more unconventional uses of household objects next month.

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