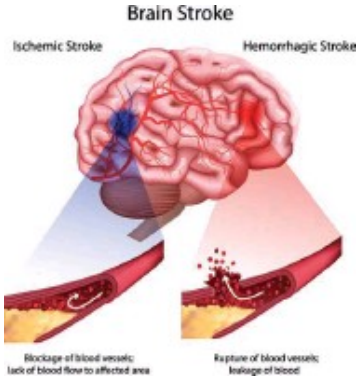
- Stroke

When the brain falls into a state of inertia

And how Luke Perry's death is a warning to all of us

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We've heard a lot of horror stories about stroke and how people's fates were turned around upon diagnosis. It's a common cause of death—in fact, it is the fourth leading cause of death in the UK. Just last Monday, March 4, Riverdale actor and 90210 matinee idol Luke



Perry succumbed to "massive stroke" at the young age of 52.

It is not a rare condition, but most stroke patients are older, which is why Luke's death came as a surprise for many, and could be filed under celebrities-gone-too-soon. The actor's family did not disclose details regarding his medical findings so it is not clear if he had a history of high blood pressure or the kind of stroke he suffered from. According to Dr. Mitchell S.V. Elkind, chair of the American Stroke Association Advisory Committee, stroke is "...not only a disease of the elderly. Luke Perry's tragic death highlights the fact that stroke can affect middleaged and young adults, even children."

Stroke is a traitor, leading everyone to believe it only occurs in a certain age group, which is why young ones shrug off the warning signs.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING STROKE

Stroke happens when the blood flow to an area of your brain is diminished, depriving the brain cells of oxygen and causing them to die. This phenomenon triggers a part of our brain to shut off memory and muscle control. Contrary to popular belief, stroke is not an instant paralysis directly affecting the muscles. It is in fact, a brain aneurysm and a disruption in blood transmission. It renders your brain bloodless. It is a brain attack and it can happen in two ways. An ischemic stroke is caused by a blockage in the artery while hemorrhagic stroke, from the name itself, is caused by a leak or burst in a blood vessel. Ischemic stroke is the common stroke complication and is responsible for 87 percent of stroke incidents. Hypertension is the main risk factor that causes stroke because it damages the brain's blood vessels by narrowing it down and officially closing its pathways. A hemorrhagic stroke however, is less likely to happen and only 15 percent of all stroke cases were reported. This happens when

pressure damages a blood vessel thus causing blood to burst and bleed through a region of the brain. It could either be caused by a blood vessel leak or brain aneurysm forming a distention in the artery.

WARNING SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

While it is true that severe complications call for an emergency, there are early signs and symptoms. Warning signs are sudden that it only feels like a jolt—an onset of neurological symptoms lasting for a few minutes. When stroke weakens cerebral functions, its complications may stem from cognitive changes like speech difficulty and comprehension skills. Most people with stroke tend to speak in slurs and develop dysphasia over time. Our brain controls our muscles, so stroke counters our ability to move, paving the way for mild to fullblown paralysis.

Doctors have developed a relatively easy way to recognize its early signs, and at the comfort of our own home. You can perform FAST (facial
droops, arm dropping to test imbalance and see if the other arm begins to fall, speech disturbance, and taking action to call 911 to immediately report to a hospital). This acronym has been disseminated to raise awareness and save many.

People suffering from hemorrhagic stroke experience more severe cases of headache and vomiting. One symptom that can elevate dizziness is an eyesight imbalance. Impaired brain cells mean impaired eyesight. One of the warning signs you shouldn't dodge when it comes to stroke is the difficulty seeing things with one or both eyes. Some people only confuse this with astigmatism.

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