

HEALTH

BAYSIDE



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Stroke screening important for senior citizens

Life Line Screening offers one-day clinics throughout area

BY TONY RUSSO
STAFF WRITER

BERLIN – Jim Mallory sat in the Most Blessed Sacrament Catholic School library anteroom filling out a medical history form. The retired Army captain was waiting his turn for a stroke screening during a one-day clinic.

Life Line Screening is a Prince George's County company that has a mobile screening team. The team travels from destination to destination seeing as many people as possible at each stop.

Mallory said the screening wasn't covered by his health insurance but he felt as if the fee was worth taking out of his own pocket.

"I heard about it in a letter I got from the MOAA (Military Officers Association of America)," Mallory said. "If they find something we can take care of it."

A stroke screening might pick up on symptoms a doctor might not during a regular examination. Mallory explained that he's a little concerned about his circulation and figured the exam would help allay any fears.

The screening also included checking for osteoporosis, vascular disease and heart rhythm.

At 71 years old, Mallory was about the median age among people at the screening. Stroke



TONY RUSSO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Medical Technician Alisha Wilson begins Jim Mallory's stroke screening by taking his pulse and other vital statistics.

is a major concern for people as they approach their 60s because it can be such a debilitating event. Stroke is the third leading cause of death for people over 55.

According to the National Stroke Association, 80 percent of strokes are preventable. For people who've developed small clots or other early symptoms, a screening can be the early-warning system that saves their lives.

Mallory finished the questionnaire and sat back to wait but a few minutes after they had his

information, they called him in for his screening.

Medical technician Alisha Wilson instructed Mallory to remove his shoes and socks. She directed him to an exam table and began hooking up the sensors that would allow the ultrasound to check for potential blockages. He joked with the techs during most of the exam.

Initial results suggested Mallory didn't have an elevated stroke risk, but he said they told him it would be another three

weeks before he got the results of the vascular disease tests.

"[When I was younger] I used to jog seven days a week, my doctor had to tell me to give my body a rest," Mallory said. Although he doesn't get out and exercise the way he used to, he said he tries to watch what he eats and to get out and walk with some regularity.

"My knees just don't always cooperate," he said.

Rudy Florenosos, Life Line Screening team manager,

STROKE SIGNS

It is important to know the signs and symptoms of a stroke; in some instances a clot-busting drug can be administered to diminish the effects of a stroke. However, there is only a three-hour window when this drug can be administered. If you suspect someone is having a stroke, call 911 immediately.

Simple Stroke Test

Smile - is the smile symmetrical or is one side drooping?
Raise both arms - can they hold both arms up or is one arm weaker?
Repeat a sentence - like "The sky is blue" can they form the words?

If the answer is no to any of these questions, call 911 immediately. Note the time when you started seeing symptoms, which helps establish where a person may be within the three-hour treatment window.

—Information courtesy of the American Stroke Foundation

explained that while the staff had medical training, they were mostly medical technicians. The screeners' purpose is to provide a trail for a doctor to follow.

If a person shows symptoms, the technicians provide the primary care physician with a list of concerns and anomalies for the doctor to explore in detail.

Life Line Screening has additional clinics scheduled this month. For information, go to www.lifelinescreening.com or call 888-683-4068.

FITNESS ADVICE

Obesity is deadly condition



By David & Lisa Long

Current nutritional trends and lack of exercise has put Type 2 Diabetes at epidemic rates. The American Diabetes Association states of the children born in 2000, 32 percent of the boys and 37

percent of the girls will become Type 2 diabetics! We live in an area with an abundance of outdoor activities, but we see empty fields and parks daily.

The question that begs to be answered is; "What are we, as a community doing to combat the most devastating health crisis facing us and our children?"

Do we promote or discourage outside/inside activities (i.e.; skateboarding, bike riding, and swimming)? Are we leading by example?

It's time to stop the blame game, be accountable to yourself and your kids. Quit excuse making, it is not expensive or any more time consuming than watching a 30 minute sitcom to do something healthy for yourself and your family.

We encourage you to get up off the couch, step away from the computer, put down the bag of cheesy curls and go take a walk (the dog would love

to smell the bush down the road). Try doing sit ups during commercial breaks, challenge your brother, sister, wife to a friendly game of HORSE.

Our ancestors fought for our freedom, we're becoming too unhealthy to enjoy that freedom. We're not asking for a country full of Olympians, just how about not letting eating too much and exercising too little bring us to our knees. This is something we can turn around; life is all about choices...what do you choose?

David & Lisa Long are personal trainers and own Live Long Fitness in West Ocean City. 410-726-0262 or www.livelongfitness.com.