

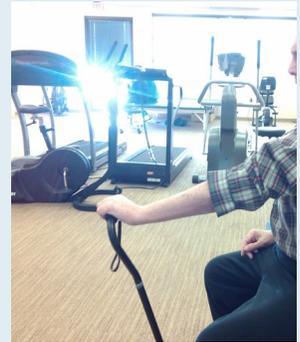
# Stroke Recovery Tips

[www.stroke-rehab.com](http://www.stroke-rehab.com)

## Recovering from Upper Extremity Hemiplegia

I get many questions from stroke patients on how to rehabilitate an arm that only has a little movement. One thing I suggest is to use the arm for as many activities as you can throughout the day. Here are some activities you can try:

1. Place the affected hand on a ball and try to roll it slightly side to side and forward and back.
2. Try to roll a ball across a table by moving it with the arm. You can use the forearm or upper arm if the hand does not work well.
3. Try to use the arm to turn off a light switch.
4. Try to slide a dry washcloth or towel across a table.
5. Try using a hook grasp and carry a light bucket.
6. Try to hit a balloon. Use whatever part of your arm/hand that you can.
7. Try to pinch/release or grasp/release an object.
8. Try to move, scoot, or slide objects across a table with the weak arm.
9. Try bilateral activities such as raising a dowel, lifting a ball with two hands, pushing a rolling cart or shopping basket with two hands.
10. Try to eat finger foods using the affected arm.
11. Try to push/pull a cane.
12. Try to place a bean bag on a target.
13. Try to empty a cup of cotton balls.
14. Use your imagination & try different activities.



Visit [http://www.stroke-rehab.com/stroke-hand-rehab.html#Hemiplegic Hand](http://www.stroke-rehab.com/stroke-hand-rehab.html#Hemiplegic%20Hand) for more ideas.

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## Exercise Tip of the Month: Sensory Re-Education

Numbness, tingling, hypersensitivity, and varying degrees of sensory loss can occur after stroke. Sensory re-education is a technique that therapists use in attempt to retrain sensory pathways or stimulate unused pathways. Listed below are some exercises to help with sensation. For maximum improvement, perform exercises 2-4x day for 10 minutes in a quiet room.

Try to differentiate between textures (i.e. cotton, sandpaper, satin, Velcro, rubber, velvet, wool, etc.)

Hide objects such as marbles, coins, etc. in a bowl of rice/dry beans/sand. Without using vision, try to find the objects with your hand.

Have another person touch you on one spot with your

eyes open, then with your eyes closed. Try to associate where you saw object touch your skin to how it felt on your skin.

Have another person keep pressure still on your skin then move it around. Watch and pay attention how it feels. Close eyes and try to identify when the pressure is still versus when it is moving.

Have someone place different objects in your hand while you are looking (i.e. cotton ball, marble, key, paper clip). Close your eyes and then try to identify objects as they are placed in your hand again one at a time.

Fill a flexible paper cup (i.e. Dixie cup) half full with water. Attempt to grasp cup without spilling the water or smashing the cup. Use your vision to de-

termine how much pressure you are putting on the cup (i.e. if cup is slipping out of hand, apply more pressure; if cup is squeezed to hard, lessen grip).

Have another person apply cold and or warmth to your skin and see if you can detect temperature differences.

Feel an object then try to find a matching object inside bowl of dry beans or rice.

Close eyes and have someone else position your affected arm. See if you can tell what position your arm is in (i.e. my elbow is bent) then open your eyes to see what position it is in.

Close eyes. Have someone else place a lighter object on your hand then a heavier object. Try to determine which object was heavier or lighter.

## Helpful Stroke Websites

The following are websites devoted to stroke information or issues related to stroke:

### In the USA:

[American Stroke Association](#)

[National Aphasia Association](#)

[National Family Caregivers Association](#)

[National Stroke Association](#)

[National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke Education \(NINDS\)](#)

[The Stroke Network](#)

[Children's Hemiplegia & Stroke Association](#)

### Outside of the USA (English websites):

[The Stroke Foundation of New Zealand](#)

[National Stroke Foundation \(Australia\)](#)

[Stroke Recovery Association \(NSW\)](#)

[Stroke Association \(UK\)](#)

[Chest, Heart and Stroke Scotland](#)

[Northern Ireland Chest, Heart and Stroke Association](#)

[Stroke Engine Family \(Canada\)](#)

## CAREGIVER'S CORNER: WEBSITES FOR CAREGIVERS

The following is a list of websites that talk about caregiver assistance and information

[www.Caregiver.com](#)

A leading provider of information and resources for family and professional caregivers.

[www.Strokesafe.org](#)

SAFE (Stroke Awareness for Everyone, Inc.) is an international Internet-centered coalition of stroke survivors and their families, in addition to doctors, nurses and therapists involved with stroke.

[www.Strokecaregiver.org](#)

An on-line stroke support net-

work of stroke information.

[www.Caregiver.org](#)

Founded in 1977, Family Caregiver Alliance was the first community-based non-profit organization in the country to address the needs of families and friends providing long-term care at home. Long recognized as a pioneer in health services, FCA now offers programs at national, state and local levels to support and sustain caregivers.

[Elder Care: First Steps](#) –

Caring for an aging parent, elderly spouse, domestic partner or close friend presents tough challenges. Of-

ten, you're not sure of the next step, or even the first step. This article from **Aging Parents and Elder Care** is a step-by-step guide to help you begin your caregiving journey.

[www.Longtermcarelocators.com](#)

Nationwide Senior Care Resource For Caregivers, Families & Companies Since 2003.

[Elder Care Online](#)

A beacon for people caring for aging loved ones. Whether you are caring for a spouse, parent, relative or neighbor, they are committed to providing an online community where supportive peers and professionals help you improve quality of life for yourself and your elder.



## Tips for Dealing with Incontinence

Establish a toileting schedule (e.g. set a timer for every 2 hours).

Improve physical mobility and transfers.

If mobility is an issue, invest in adaptive clothing that allows for clothing to be changed from a seated position.

Devise a communication method for stroke patient if they are unable to verbalize needs.

Practice Kegel exercises which strengthen the pelvic floor.

Use a bedside commode to make it easier to get to the bathroom quickly.

Ask your MD about medications for overactive bladder if applicable.

Examine meds with MD to make sure that they are not causing urinary problems.

Notify your caregiver of the need to urinate or move your bowels as soon as it comes on—waiting can lead to accidents.

Limit fluids in the evening before bed.

Limit caffeine.

Use disposable undergarment or pantliners.

Carry extra set of clean garments when leaving the house.