



Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy - Hope for Stroke Victims

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Every year approximately 700,000 people in the United States suffer a stroke. It is the leading cause of serious, long-term disability, and the third leading cause of death. Two million Americans are enduring crippling disabilities from stroke which may include paralysis, spasticity, reduced mobility, speech impairment, swallowing and mental difficulties, memory loss and personality changes to name a few.

A stroke occurs when there is a sudden loss of blood and oxygen to a specific area of the brain. It can be caused by bleeding in the brain, an artery being blocked by a blood clot or narrowed by buildup of plaques or cholesterol on the arterial walls resulting in diminished or complete blockage of blood flow.

Lack of oxygen causes areas of the brain die or become dormant. Usually there is an irreparably damaged area at the core, surrounded by tissue known as ischemic penumbra. The cells in this area are not dead, but are not functioning due to swelling from lack of blood and oxygen. However they contain "idling" neurons. Reduction of swelling and formation of new blood vessels made possible with HBOT, allows fresh oxygen rich blood and nutrients to reach the damaged tissue, restoring not the dead, but the dormant cells. Neurons gradually reconnect resulting in a return of functionality and in some cases, substantial dramatic recovery.

In the journal *Stroke*, Dr. Richard Neubauer, a pioneer in the use of hyperbaric oxygen and various neurological diseases, reported outstanding results in a group of stroke patients treated with HBO. Whether a patient is seen within the first 24 hours after a stroke or 10 years later, recovery of non-functioning dormant cells has been achieved. HBOT enhances the healing capabilities in areas of the brain not available with any other form of therapy.

Research results presented at the National Stroke Association Conference evaluating treatment of stroke patients with HBO reported marked improvements in mobility, speech, memory, cognitive ability, vision, balance, and more.

Tammy, a relatively new patient at the HBOT clinic, while living in North Carolina, suffered a stroke in 2004 which paralyzed her right side and left her with speech impairment. A year of physical, occupational and speech therapy at the hospital 3 times a week helped enough to allow her to do minimal tasks. She also tried some non-traditional therapy.

She has since moved back to San Antonio, and learned about HBOT. When she first visited the clinic she still had motor skills problems and wears a lower right leg brace for stabilization, she couldn't raise her right arm and her hand remained clenched. She had a hard time putting her thoughts into words, still had trouble with speech itself, and had sleep problems. She had to do

everything very slow and deliberate.

Tammy told me her story and said she wished she could tell everyone how much HBOT is helping her! She said that after her very first session she had such a good night's sleep, felt so good and had so much energy the next day, and that alone to her was an achievement!

She has had only 6 HBO sessions at this writing, but is SO excited about her improvements, especially since its been 4 years since her stroke! She sleeps better and is calmer. She even said she may ask her Dr. to reduce her medication because now it makes her feel drowsy. (HBO often enhances the effects of medication.) She's speaking better, is able to raise her right arm and open her hand (although still with some effort). Her grown son noticed that she is walking faster. She proudly announced she had so much energy, at therapy she walked on the treadmill

for 45 minutes! She can't wait to surprise her husband when he returns from Iraq in December. I get tickled at her because she just beams, and has a new accomplishment to tell us about each day. After she completes her initial concentrated HBOT sessions, she plans on continuing with maintenance sessions as long as she can. (Statistics show that after the recommended number HBOT sessions for stroke, patients may

continue to improve for at least two years with physical therapy. The key is to awaken those dormant brain cells with HBOT, then start retraining the body).

In retrospect Tammy realizes she had several mini-strokes before her devastating one, but she was not familiar with the symptoms and ignored them.

Treatment of stroke is nearly a decade behind the treatment of heart attacks!

Treatment within the first 3 hours can make a difference in damage sustained! If you don't know the symptoms of stroke, I can't impress on you how important it is to know what to look for. You can find much information on the internet.... and remember, HBOT can help!

After retiring from 35 years in the computer field, Helen Prater developed an interest in alternative health medicine. She became interested and began researching HBOT in an effort to find help and hope for her husband with congestive heart failure and diabetes, her nephew with ALS, and her niece with Lupus. She scoured the Internet, read articles, visited HBOT clinics, and even took dives herself. Her mission was to find out everything that she could about this simple, but powerful, treatment and how it can help. Call 210-654-6464 or visit the website: www.sanantoniohyperbarics.com

What is HBOT?

Hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) is a medical treatment approved by the FDA and AMA which enhances tissue levels of life giving oxygen. Normally, oxygen is almost exclusively carried by red blood cells. During HBO therapy, all body fluids, including the lymph and cerebrospinal fluids are infused with the healing benefits of this molecular oxygen. Pressurization forces it to reach bone and tissue that is inaccessible to the blood cells even when compromised by injury or disease.

