



Stay healthy and happy this holiday season

The hustle and bustle of the holidays can bring unexpected medical concerns, including increased risk for heart attack and stroke. Several studies have shown that the incidence of heart attack and stroke increase in December and January, particularly on Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

- 1. Reduce stress.*
- 2. Eat and drink in moderation.*
- 3. Be vigilant with medication.*
- 4. Exercise - and get rest.*
- 5. Know the symptoms for heart attack and stroke, and don't delay in seeking medical attention.*

Taking time to be mindful of stress and the triggers of heart attack and stroke can hopefully help safeguard an enjoyable and pleasant holiday season. For more tips on handling the holidays and staying healthy visit the [Mayo Clinic News Network](#)

Meet Lou Buffo....rock star and stroke survivor

By Maureen Pekosh

An accomplished drummer whose repertoire included "jazz, reggae, beach stuff, country, even heavy metal", Lou never thought at his age he could be suffering a hemorrhagic stroke. He initially thought, "I'm never going to play drums again." Lou was hospitalized for eighty-eight days, undergoing five surgeries. Without any rehabilitation, he has slowly started to teach himself to play again and is building drums from used guitars and parts purchased on Amazon. Lou is a veritable virtuoso.



"Pretty athletic," Lou was doing air conditioning work for a friend. He found the heat and height unbearable. His wife, a nurse, rushed him to the hospital where the hospital staff attempted to relieve the pressure from his brain bleed, even removing a piece of his skull and then treated him for an infection. He was confused, didn't recognize familiar faces, and had his hand strapped to his side.

In time, he improved some and started to recognize people but what he really wanted was to play his drums. With no social security withheld from his wages, there wasn't money for rehab. He joined a stroke study that focused on his posture not his hands and he felt like a guinea pig. Another stroke survivor advised him to keep squeezing a rubber ball and he still squeezes it all day long.

Lou was really unhappy when he came to. He asked himself, "How are we going to fix this?" He began playing the drums with his right arm envisioning himself as the "one handed drummer". But rock stars don't settle. He tied a drumstick to his left hand. Then he learned a new way to hold the drumstick from YouTube. He now holds a drumstick with his left hand and he's remembering a lot of what he used to know musically.

Lou shares, "Things you take for granted were gone. Now they're back." He still has no peripheral vision in his left eye and can't drive. "I intend on this being something in the past, not something I have to deal with every day. But putting on pants, cooking, the smaller things, that's the hard part."

His wife keeps him positive and they work together as a team. He's has reconnected with his father after not speaking to him for almost twenty-five years and he hopes to repay all the friends that "came out of the woodwork" to help him by playing for free. Once he realized he could play again, he "wanted to do it every day." A rock star is reborn.

SSEEO learned of Lou's story through his friend Tom. Tom reached out to SSEEO looking for resources and support for his young friend. Tom recently had a Facebook birthday fundraiser where he raised just over \$550.00 in honor of Lou. Tom then donated this money to SSEEO.

A special thank you to both Lou (for sharing his story) and Tom (for his generous donation). If you or a loved one as suffered a stroke you can visit the SSEEO website at www.sseeo.org for resources, support or to make a donation.

Stroke Talks 2 Go

[Stroke Talks 2 Go \(ST2G\)](#) is a series of stroke prevention and treatment presentations (Women and Stroke, Young Stroke, etc.) with Power Points and videotaped stroke survivor/caregiver stories. They are available as a resource on the [SSEEO](#) website for anyone needing a stroke community outreach presentation.



Contact [SSEEO](#) if you don't have a speaker but would like to educate your school, library, etc. on the warning signs and risk factors of stroke at christine@sseeo.org or visit [Stroke Talks 2 Go](#).

Young Stroke Working to Make a Difference

[SSEEO's](#) young stroke committee met on Saturday, November 16th with each person sharing their stroke experience and ways they would like to educate the community. Ideas included presentations to EMT's, physicians and schools, e-news and Facebook stories, resources (products & tips) sheets and website blog. The committee's next meeting will be held in January.



If you are a young stroke survivor interested in learning more about the [SSEEO Young Stroke Committee](#), please contact christine@sseeo.org.



Mark Your Calendar for the first Lunch & Learn Teleconference of 2020

We will be discussing "Differences between Prescription and OTC Medicines" scheduled for Tuesday, January 14th, 12:00-12:45 pm. Watch for more details.

SSEEO

P.O. BOX 855 LOMBARD IL 60148
1(888) 988-8047

E-mail



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make a difference.*

