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# Southeast Hospital Recognized with Prestigious American Heart Association (AHA) Awards

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Southeast Hospital has received the American Heart Association's 2022 Get With The Guidelines Stroke Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award for its commitment to improving outcomes for patients who suffer strokes. The award validates Southeast's approach to stroke treatment according to nationally recognized, research-based guidelines, which ultimately leads to more lives saved and reduced disability.

Stroke is the number five cause of death and a leading cause of disability in the U.S. A stroke occurs when a blood vessel that carries oxygen and nutrients to the brain is either blocked by a clot or bursts. When that happens, part of the brain cannot get the blood and oxygen it needs, so brain cells die. Early stroke detection and treatment are key to improving survival, accelerating recovery times and minimizing disability.

Get With The Guidelines puts the expertise of the American Heart Association and American Stroke Association to work for hospitals nationwide, helping ensure patient care is aligned with the latest research and evidence-based guidelines.

"Seeking immediate medical help is crucial for stroke patients," said Matthew Hileman, DO, Medical Director of the Southeast Stroke Center. "Stroke is a real and serious concern in Missouri. About one quarter of adult Missourians are smokers, which can raise their risk for stroke up to four times." He added that up to 80 percent of strokes are preventable if people embrace a healthy lifestyle that includes quitting tobacco, managing cholesterol and controlling high blood pressure and diabetes. Hileman also noted that about one quarter of strokes happen in people under the age of 65.

He emphasized that the primary therapies to minimize stroke symptoms and offer a better chance of recovery must be given within a few hours of symptom onset. "That's why it is so important to call 9-1-1 or get to the nearest emergency department quickly. Don't wait a few hours to see if symptoms go away. Get medical help immediately."

"We are incredibly pleased to recognize Southeast Hospital for its commitment to caring for patients with stroke," said Steven Messe, MD, chairperson of the Stroke System of Care Advisory Group. "Participation in Get With The Guidelines is associated with improved patient outcomes, fewer readmissions and lower mortality rates, a win for healthcare systems, families and communities."

Southeast Hospital also received the American Heart Association's Target: Stroke Honor Roll. This distinction is based on meeting specific criteria to reduce the time between an eligible patient's arrival at the hospital and treatment with the clot-buster Alteplase. If given in the first three hours after the start of stroke symptoms, Alteplase has been shown

to lessen the chance of permanent disability.

In addition, Southeast Hospital also received the American Heart Association's Target: Type 2 Diabetes Honor Roll. This initiative helps ensure that patients with Type 2 diabetes, who may be at higher risk for complications, receive the most up-to-date, evidence-based care when hospitalized due to stroke.

#### About SoutheastHEALTH

At SoutheastHEALTH, the region's premier healthcare system in southeast Missouri, our patients receive excellent care of the highest clinical quality, close to home. Within our network are more than 51 care locations in 11 communities, including hospitals, primary and specialty care clinics representing over 30 clinical specialties and extending care for patients in a four-state area. Learn more at SEhealth.org.

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