Avoid Stroke
Act FAST!

As you can see from the accompanying article by Lauren Chow, the Outrigger Enterprises Group has been recognized for promoting healthy lifestyles for the members of its extended ‘ohana. That is a particularly important concept right now, as our nation debates the possibilities of reforming its health care system.

Unfortunately, only a small amount of the heated rhetoric coming out of Washington, D.C., has focused on the prevention of disease. That is not surprising to me because for many decades, most health care insurance plans have been geared more toward treating illness, than preventing it. Prevention gets only minor attention, but hopefully that is changing.

For example, stroke or heart attack, an injury to the brain or heart caused by impaired circulation, is definitely associated with risk factors such as high blood pressure, diabetes, high blood cholesterol levels, excessive alcohol intake, and smoking. If we focused on treating these risk factors, the incidence of stroke and heart attack would be significantly reduced.

This was brought home to me recently when I was fortunate enough to be able to join two well-known gentlemen, both stroke survivors, who are working to get that message out in the community.

One of the men I met is Haven Moses, a talented wide receiver who played for the Denver Broncos from 1972 to 1981. Wearing jersey number 25, Moses went to two Pro Bowls and Super Bowl XII. As a member of the Broncos Ring of Fame since 1988, his name is prominently displayed along with other Broncos greats on the inner ring of the stands at Invesco Field at Mile High Stadium. Moses suffered a stroke in 2003.

The other gentleman is Mark McEwen, an American television personality. He was the weatherman on *The Early Show* on CBS from 1987 to 2002 and contributed to the network’s coverage of the 1992 Winter Olympics in Albertville, France, and the 1994 Winter Olympics in Lillehammer, Norway.


In 2005, McEwen became a news anchor for WKMGTV, a CBS affiliate in Orlando, FL, but that career abruptly ended in November 2005, when he suffered a stroke in mid-air while traveling.

Both of these stroke survivors now dedicate a good portion of their lives to educating others about stroke and its prevention.

McEwen courageously goes across the country to speak about stroke awareness and has recently published a book, *Change in the Weather: Life After Stroke*.

Moses is a board member of the Colorado Neurological Institute and works with the Archdiocese of Denver to inspire others to make the life changes necessary to prevent stroke.

It is estimated that up to 80 percent of strokes are preventable. The National Stroke Association publishes excellent information about stroke, the risk factors, and how to reduce your chance of getting a stroke. It’s all available online at www.stroke.org.

- It is not that hard.
  - If you smoke, STOP.
  - If you drink alcohol, drink in moderation.
• Include exercise in your daily routine.
• Eat right – keep your cholesterol down.
• Keep your blood pressure in the range of 120/80.

If it looks as though somebody does not feel right, use the FAST method to look for the signs of a stroke.

F = FACE  Ask the person to smile. Does one side of the face droop?
A = ARM  Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?
S = SPEECH  Ask the person to repeat a simple phrase. Does the speech sound slurred or strange?
T = TIME  If you observe any of these signs, it’s time to call 9-1-1.

Act FAST!!! Speed is important because proper treatment, quickly administered, can significantly reduce the damage and make it more likely that a patient can return to a normal or near-normal life.

Learn from the experiences of Haven Moses and Mark McEwen. Take advantage of the many opportunities to improve your health. It could save your life!