

NYU Designated First Site for Stroke Care

In April NYU Medical Center became the first hospital in New York State to be designated a Primary Stroke Center by the New York State Department of Health. The designation followed a successful pilot study involving 20 other hospitals in Brooklyn and Queens that also received similar status.

As a result of this designation—similar to those used for burn and trauma centers—any suspected stroke victim within 20 minutes of transport to NYU Medical Center will automatically be brought here by New York City’s Emergency Medical Service (EMS). This will help to ensure that such patients are treated by medical personnel who are specially trained and equipped to diagnose a stroke accurately and to treat it promptly.

According to Maria Brilliant, R.N.,

the Stroke Center’s Administrative Nursing Coordinator, during the first two weeks of May, just after the designation, the center treated 22 patients—twice the number it usually sees during that time span.

Strokes are the third-leading cause of death in the United States and the leading cause of long-term disability, notes Keith A. Siller, M.D., (’89) Assistant Professor of Neurology and Psychiatry, and Director of the center. A stroke, or “brain attack,” is caused by interruption of the blood supply to the brain due to a clot (ischemic stroke) or leakage of a blood vessel into the brain (hemorrhagic stroke).

Treatment for acute ischemic stroke includes the clot-busting drug rt-PA (recombinant tissue plasminogen activator). This medication is most effective when administered within three

hours of the onset of symptoms. Unfortunately, fewer than 5 percent of those who suffer a stroke reach a hospital in time to be considered for this treatment. By designating selected hospitals as Primary Stroke Centers, the Department of Health hopes to significantly increase the number of stroke victims who are able to receive rt-PA in time.

The Stroke Center integrates many services throughout the Medical Center. In the Emergency Department, for example, a new high-speed CT scanner enables doctors to quickly pinpoint the part of the brain where therapy is needed. In the new Acute Stroke Unit located on the east wing of the 17th floor of Tisch Hospital, specially trained nurses provide 24-hour care. In the Rusk Institute, a 30-bed rehabilitation unit provides comprehensive services for those requiring acute rehabilitation. The result, says Dr. Siller, is a seamless continuum of care. ■

Ten NYU Programs Rank Among Top 50 Nationwide in *U.S. News & World Report’s* Annual Survey

In this year’s survey of the Best Hospitals in America by *U.S. News & World Report*, NYU Medical Center achieved its best showing in many years. Ten specialty areas—two more than last year—ranked among the top hospitals nationwide in the 17 medical specialties surveyed. NYU’s Cancer and Ear, Nose, and Throat programs joined this elite group of institutions for the first time in some years, and the Orthopaedics (listed as Hospital for Joint Diseases) and Urology programs advanced 8 and 26 places respectively since last year.

Only one other hospital system in New York City is ranked in more specialties than NYU, and NYU has more than twice the number of specialties than the remaining ranked hospitals in the city. For the 16th consecutive year, the Rusk Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine was ranked Number One in New York State.

To qualify as one of the 50 Best, a hospital must meet rigorous standards. Of all 6,007 U.S. medical centers (military and veterans hospitals are not included), fewer than one in

Specialty	2005 Rank	2000 Rank
1. Cancer	33	○
2. Ear, Nose & Throat	33	○
3. Geriatrics	17	○
4. Gynecology	29	○
5. Neurology/Neurosurgery	12	31
6. Orthopaedics (HJD)	22	18
7. Psychiatry	17	○
8. Rehabilitation (RUSK)	8	7
9. Rheumatology (HJD)	16	13
Rheumatology (NYU)	17	15
10. Urology	21	○

30 were deemed to be high enough in quality to be ranked in even a single specialty. As part of the process, board-certified physicians were selected at random from the AMA’s master file of the nation’s 811,000 doctors. These specialists were asked to list up to five hospitals they believe to be the best in their specialty. ■