

Health

CONTACT: SARAH GRIESEMER :: 732-643-4204 :: SGRIESEMER@NJPRESSMEDIA.COM

HEALTH DANGERS STAY SAFE IN SUMMER SUN

FEELING THE HEAT

Recognizing the signs of heatstroke could save your life

By Susan Bloom :: For NJ Press Media

About seven miles into a leg of the River to Sea Relay he was running between Milford and Manasquan, Jeff Goldsmith recalled feeling a little tired.

He didn't remember falling down, or that he continued to crawl his way along the race route, as members of his seven-man relay team would later tell him he did.

"It was the last thing I ever expected to happen ... I never lost consciousness, but I was totally unresponsive," said the 41-year-old Livingston resident, an avid runner who had successfully completed numerous marathons and triathlons. "The 9-plus-mile leg of the race that I was running was right in the heart of the mid-day heat and was on a stretch of road where there was no shade."

"I knew it was hot, and I wouldn't normally run in those conditions, but I felt that I was in appropriate condition to do it from my prior training," he said, "and I was very conscious to stay well-hydrated along the way."

Despite his elite training and experience, Goldsmith would prove no match for the grueling temperatures — it reached higher than 90 degrees that day, July 30 — the beating sun, or the wide open leg of the race ironically nicknamed "Long and Hot." Within moments of his collapse, his teammates dove on him to stop him from moving, pulled him into a shaded area, doused him with water to help lower his body temperature and dialed 911.

Their quick-thinking may have saved Goldsmith's life. He was rushed to the emergency room at CentraState Medical Center in Freehold Township with a temperature of nearly 106 degrees and other indicators that many of his vital organs were in jeopardy. Goldsmith's severe form of heatstroke required an eight-day hospital stay and a medical absence from his position as general counsel for an architectural firm in New York City.

See HEAT, Page B8

TIPS FOR PREVENTING HEATSTROKE:

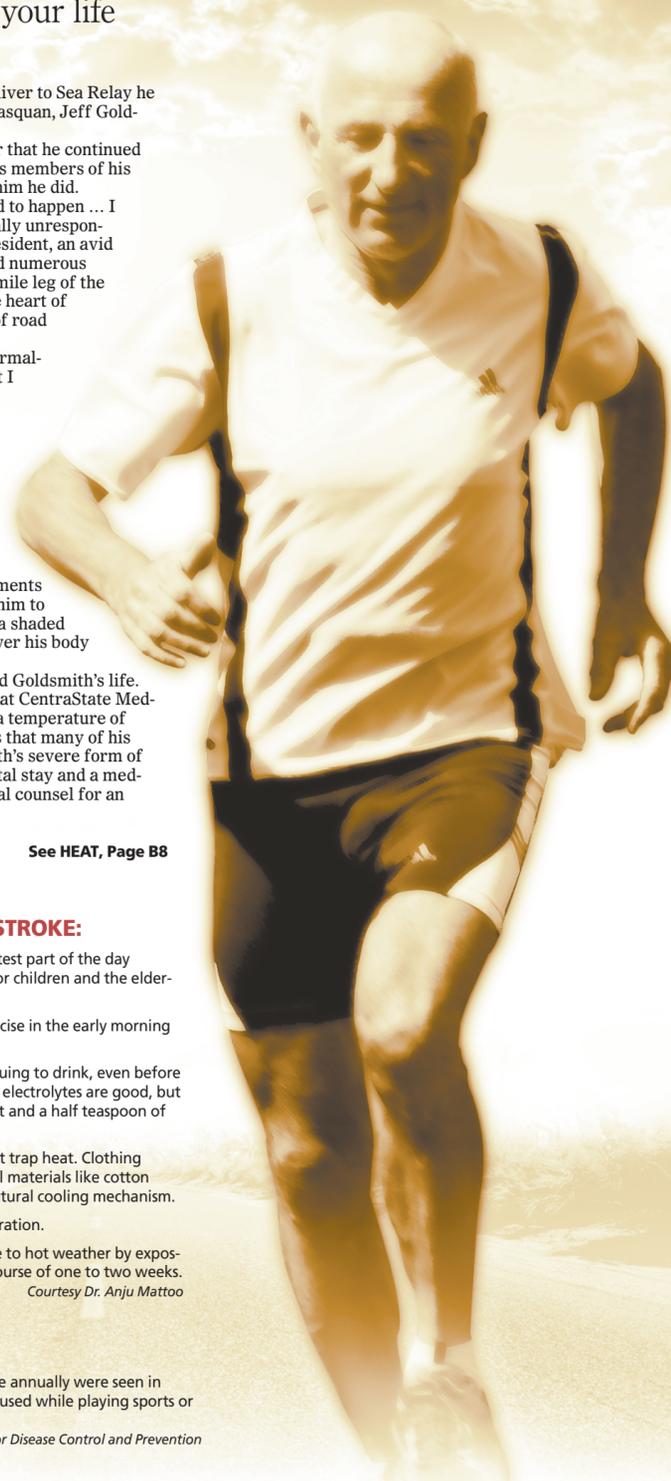
- » Avoiding outdoor activity during the hottest part of the day (between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.), particularly for children and the elderly, and heeding weather advisories.
- » During the hottest times of the year, exercise in the early morning or late evening.
- » Hydrating liberally with fluids and continuing to drink, even before you feel thirsty. Sports drinks that replenish electrolytes are good, but drinking a glass of water with a pinch of salt and a half teaspoon of sugar before you go out also is effective.
- » Wearing light-colored clothing that won't trap heat. Clothing made with wicking technology or of natural materials like cotton effectively promote sweating, the body's natural cooling mechanism.
- » Avoiding alcohol, which promotes dehydration.
- » Allowing your body to properly acclimate to hot weather by exposing it for 10-15 minutes at a time over the course of one to two weeks.

Courtesy Dr. Anju Mattoo

HEATSTROKE STRIKES

Between 2001 and 2009, nearly 6,000 people annually were seen in emergency rooms for heat-related illness caused while playing sports or engaged in other outdoor activities.

Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE RISKS INCREASE

Pregnancy-related strokes jump 54 percent

By Serena Gordon :: Healthday

The risk of suffering a stroke during — or soon after — pregnancy has increased dramatically in recent years, according to new U.S. government research.

From the mid-1990s to 2006-2007, the rate of pregnancy-related stroke hospitalizations went up by 54 percent.

"When we started this study, we expected to see some increase in pregnancy-related stroke, but we did not expect to see such a big increase," said study author Dr. Elena Kuklina, an epidemiologist in the division for heart disease and stroke prevention at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta.

But pregnancy-related stroke is still "pretty rare," she added. About 4,000 strokes a year occurred at the start of the study, compared to more than 6,000 at the end.

Results of the study, published online July 28, will appear in the September print edition of the journal *Stroke*.

The study wasn't designed to assess what factors influenced the increased risk of stroke, Kuklina said. But women today are often older when they get pregnant, and they may be overweight or obese, which are known risk factors for stroke, she noted.

Also, more women who become pregnant have pre-existing chronic medical conditions, such as congenital heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes and autoimmune diseases, she said. In the past, many of these women would have been dis-

SYMPTOMS THAT NEED IMMEDIATE ATTENTION:

- » Sudden confusion, or trouble speaking or understanding others
- » Sudden weakness or numbness in the face, arms or legs, especially if this occurs only on one side
- » Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- » Trouble walking or coordinating movements
- » Sudden severe headache with no known cause

couraged from attempting pregnancy.

Data for the study came from a national database that gathers discharge information from 1,000 hospitals.

The rate of hospitalization for stroke during pregnancy went up 47 percent from 1994-95 to 2006-2007, according to the study. In the postpartum period (after the birth of the baby), the rate of stroke hospitalizations jumped even more — 83 percent — during the same time period. Rates of stroke hospitalizations remained the same during delivery.

Nearly one-third of the women who had a stroke during pregnancy, and more than half who had a stroke during the postpartum period, had high blood pressure or a history of heart disease, the study found.

Women between the ages of 25 and 34 were hospitalized for stroke more often than younger or older women.

Kuklina said that all women should try to be as healthy as possible before

See STROKE, Page B8

People's Pharmacy

By Joe Graedon
& Teresa Graedon

Questioning blood sugar levels

Q. I am on a very low-fat diet. Breakfast is bread and hot water. Lunch is oats and a banana with more hot water. Dinner is a green salad with tomatoes, no dressing and chicken sausage. Why is my blood sugar climbing?

A. You may have developed insulin resistance because of your high-carbohydrate diet. Bread, oats and bananas raise blood sugar and stimulate the pancreas to produce insulin. Eventually cells stop responding normally to insulin and blood sugar rises. You may wish to reconsider your low-fat, high-carb approach, as research now shows that this can raise triglycerides as well as blood sugar.



Q. My 8-year-old son was stung by a wasp this morning for the first time. He'd found a wasp nest and stood right next to it, screaming at the top of his voice while jumping up and down. Naturally, a wasp stung him on his back through his T-shirt. Considering he was surrounded by hundreds of them, it could have been much worse.

I used cut onion on the sting, and it worked brilliantly. Thanks to the person who suggested scoring the onion, as that got much more juice out and was very effective.

A. Freshly cut onion contains an enzyme that breaks down inflammatory compounds responsible for the pain of a wasp sting.

Q. The California raisin producers should hire me, since I irritate my friends and neighbors by yapping nonstop about gin-soaked raisins. After reading an article on your website about unflavored gelatin, I added that to my regimen. Now I wax enthusiastic about that as well. I take glucosamine-chondroitin, too.

My aging canine best buddy was developing a limp. I fed him gelatin and glucosamine-chondroitin, and, by golly, the limp is gone, and he can chase a ball. You might attribute my results to a placebo effect but not my dog's. He can't read.

Before all this, my condition had deteriorated to the point where I was in serious pain. Not anymore. The effect is not instantaneous, but it is worth a try before surgery or other invasive procedures.

A. We're glad you didn't try the gin-soaked raisins on your dog. Raisins are quite dangerous for dogs, but veterinarians have been prescribing glucosamine for stiff canine joints for a long time.

We have seen no research on the effects of taking unflavored gelatin, but other readers attest that it can help alleviate joint pain.

Q. I have had warts on my nail bed and three fingers for a year. I had them frozen and painfully burned off by my dermatologist, to no avail.

I went through several bottles of Compound W and similar products, but none worked.

My husband saw on an episode of "The Dr. Oz Show" that banana peels can be used to treat warts, and I have been using it all week. I am happy to report that this is working for me. Every morning, the warts look better, and one is completely gone. My only regret is having spent almost \$300 at the dermatologist for nothing.

A. Readers report that taping the fleshy part of a banana peel to a wart can be helpful. Thanks for your story.

Write to the Graedons via their website, www.PeoplesPharmacy.com.