Experts to talk about strokes at UVic forum

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When you suffer a brain attack, it's called stroke. Even though the symptoms don't hurt, they require urgent medical attention, whether they're part of a major assault or transient ischemic attack.

What new things are we learning from imaging technologies about the structure of the brain after a stroke?

And what do we know about rehabilitation after a stroke?

Find out the answers and more when the Centre for Biomedical Research presents a special edition of Café Scientifique from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday in the David Lam Auditorium (Room A144) in the MacLaurin Building at the University of Victoria.

On hand will be UVic neuroscientist Dr. Craig Brown and clinical neurologist Dr. Andrew Penn of the Vancouver Island Health Authority along with the centre's director, Dr. E. Paul Zehr, a neuroscientist/kinesiologist, to discuss recent developments in basic and clinical science about how the brain adapts to loss of tissue after a stroke.

Usually, the informal seminars between scientists and the public have been held in local pubs, but organizers hope that 300 people from the community will attend.

Admission is free, but RSVP to cfbr@uvic.ca or call 250-472-4067.

Between 2004 and 2010, the number of patients hospitalized for serious stroke on the south Island dropped 15 per cent, from 500 to 425. Victoria General Hospital is a leader in telestroke technology that provides upsland doctors with assistance from neurologists via computer monitors and video cameras.

But stroke still puts about 1,000 area residents in hospital in a year, with 25 per cent of them dying and many others living in care facilities. Moreover, small strokes can combine with Alzheimer's disease to bring on dementia.

In Canada as a whole, stroke is frequently not treated as a medical emergency leading to catastrophic results, the firstever audit by the Canadian Stroke Network has found. Information from 38,000 patients whose records were surveyed showed it took seven hours after the onset of symptoms to get to hospital - too late for clot-busting drugs. kdedyna@timescolonist.com

To see more about the five major signs of a stroke, visit www.timescolonist.com.

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