

Novel Supplement Strategy for Stroke Recovery

Approximately 795,000 Americans suffer new or recurrent strokes each year, and stroke is the third-leading cause of death in the United States, according to the American Stroke Association. At the Carolina Center, we frequently have stroke victims undergo hyperbaric therapy in an effort to open up circulation in the brain and improve healing through increased oxygenation of brain tissues. But supplements, too, can make a difference. According to research published in the 30 June 2011 issue of the journal *Stroke*, a natural form of vitamin E called alpha-tocotrienol can trigger production of a protein in the brain that clears toxins from nerve cells, thus preventing those cells from dying after a stroke. The tocotrienol form of vitamin E acts on multiple targets to help prevent stroke-induced brain damage and might be more potent than drugs targeting single mechanisms for preventing stroke damage. This particular form of vitamin E is not abundant in the American diet but is available as a nutritional supplement, and moreover is a common component of a typical Southeast Asian diet.