

ADDINGTON LIFTS UPDATE: NEW WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLVES TO MONITOR LIFTS REPAIR PROGRESS

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health wishes to thank the staff at Addington Hospital for returning to work following protest action over the functionality of passenger and service lifts at the hospital.

Damage due to flooding has led to the malfunctioning of four lifts for patients; two for miscellaneous services; and another two for food. Currently, a service lift and a food lift are in an operational state.

The Department has been engaging closely with the appointed service provider, who have been working flat-out to source parts and ensure that the lifts are repaired timeously.

Following a fruitful meeting this week, a working committee was formed which is made up of organised labour, facility management, senior officials from head office - including engineers from the Department's Infrastructure Development unit.

The committee will be responsible for, among others:

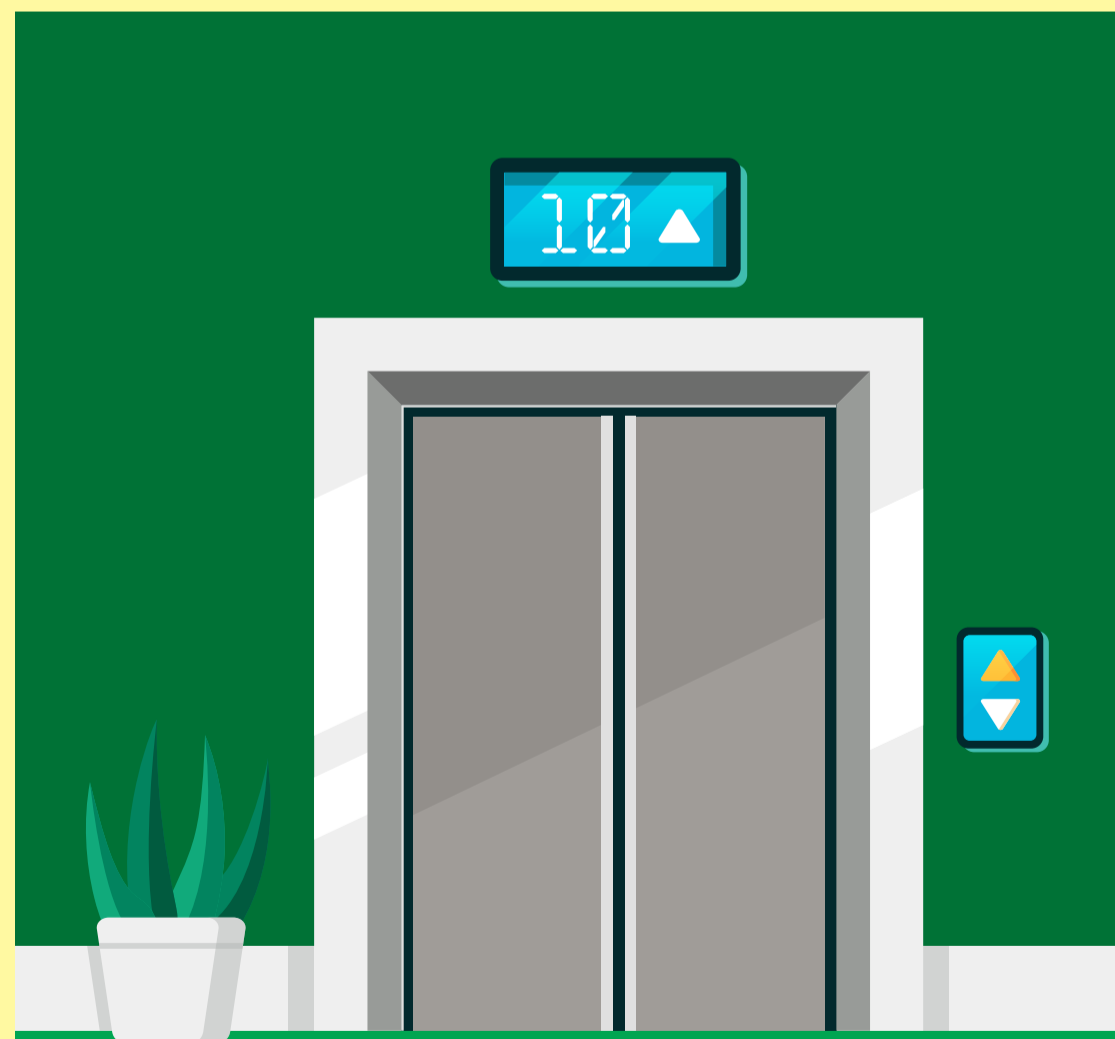
- Monitoring the day-to-day functioning of the hospital and the lifts repair process;
- Ensuring that there is regular communication between engineers, hospital management, and organised labour; and
- Keeping staff at all levels informed of the progress made in addressing any identified challenges.

It must be noted that, due to the specialised nature of the lift equipment, parts have to be ordered overseas, which may affect their timely shipping to local shores – which is susceptible to logistical backlogs caused by the COVID – 19 epidemic.


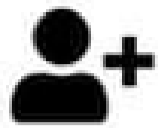



However, it must also be noted that in addition to the

imminent arrival of parts to repair the lifts, the Department has a bigger project in the pipeline to replace the old lifts. This is expected to commence early in the New Year. The Department understands the frustrations of staff and the public, and wishes to assure them that the situation at the hospital will soon return to normal.

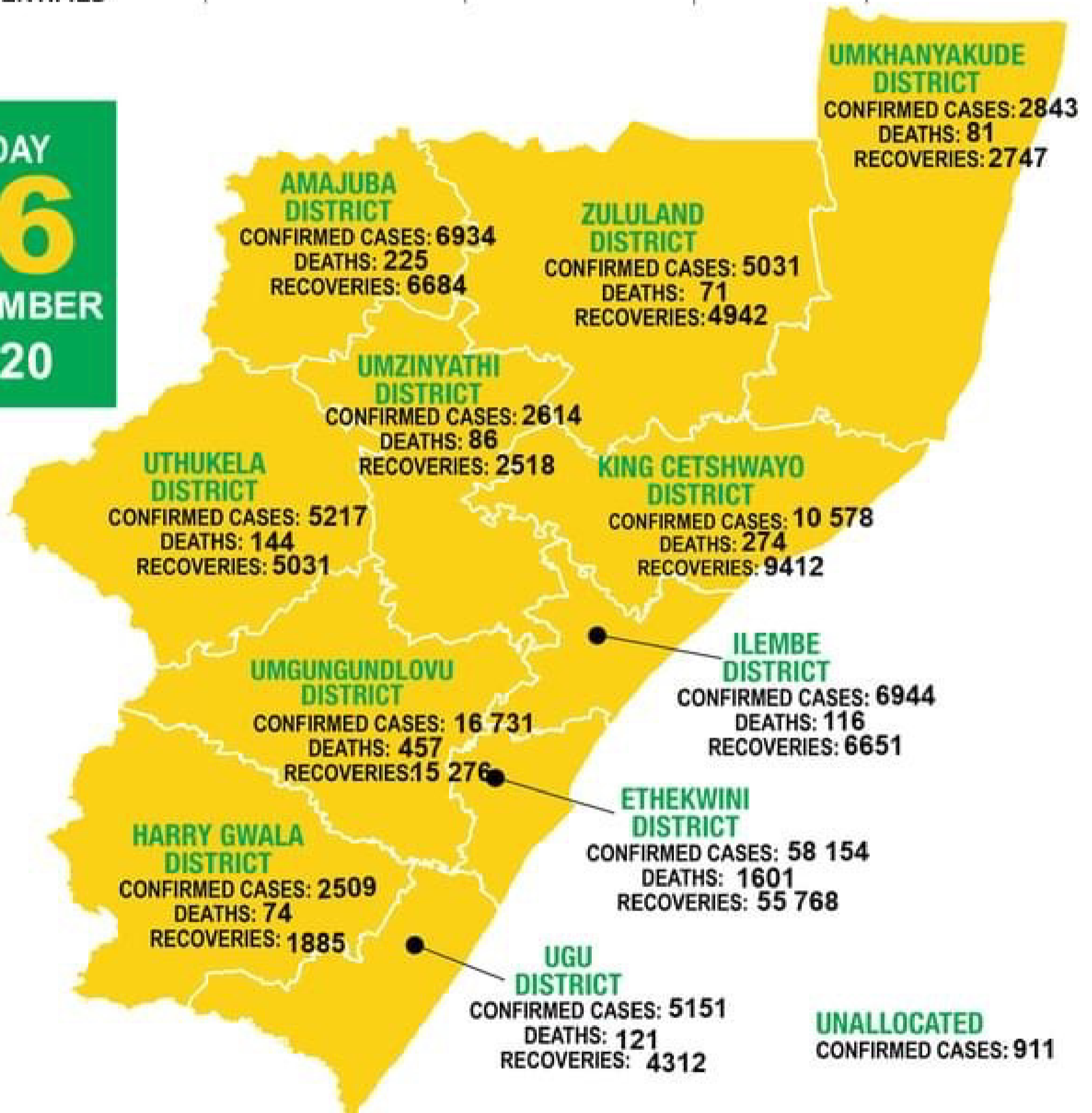
In the same vein, the Department appeals to the affected essential services workers to put the needs of the public first, and not move away from their noble mandate as health workers, which is to heal the sick, and save lives.



COVID-19 STATISTICS IN **KZN**

				
123 617	5141	115226	3250	120
POSITIVE CASES IDENTIFIED	ACTIVE CASES	RECOVERIES	DEATHS	NEW CASES

FRIDAY
06
NOVEMBER
2020



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QUALITY HEALTHCARE SERVICES FOR ALL



November is Quality Month. Health Chat Bulletin had a chat with Ms Moeketsi, Director of Quality Assurance (QA) in the KZN Department of Health about unpacking what QA is.

What is Quality Assurance?

The concept refers to

1. Identification of anything that can hamper the patient's well-being or problems in the Healthcare Sector
2. Assessment of whether things are done according to set standards or any factors that may contribute to existing problems
3. Correction: Reversal of the unwanted situation in order to regain the full potential of the patient or system.
4. Monitoring the important aspects of patient care and the healthcare system

Why is QA important in health care ?

In order to prevent mistakes and defects in the manner in which service delivery is rendered. Activities are designed to contribute towards achieving goals within the available resources

Whose responsibility is it?

Every employee of the department, patients, their families and the entire community.

What does the Health Department gain from QA activities?

- A relationship of trust between care givers and health care users.
- Healthcare facilities with less patient safety incidents and complaints, thus reducing litigations
- Increased life expectancy and reduced burden of diseases
- Accreditation and compliance to expectations of Universal Coverage

How has COVID-19 Affected QA?

The KZN DoH Clinical Governance Policy is based on six pillars, this year we are concentrating on Pillars 2 and 6. The decision is informed by the experiences during the COVID 19 Pandemic era.

They are:

- Pillar 2-Clinical Risk Management, Patient Safety Incidents and Complaints Management
- Pillar 6 - Patient/ Health Care Consumer Involvement

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NURSE WINS PRESTIGIOUS LIFE TIME ACHIEVER AWARD

In the month where the nation commemorates 16 Days of Activism Against Violence on Women and Children, a hero in the fight, Sister Duduzile Ndlovu from Port Shepstone Hospital, has been recognized. Just last week during the National Batho Pele Excellence Awards Ceremony, held at Birchwood Hotel in Johannesburg, she was awarded the 2020 Life Time Achiever Award by the Minister for Public Service and Administration, Honourable Mr Senzo Mchunu.



This enviable award was received by Sister Ndlovu for her outstanding track record of many years of dedication and service excellence in the performance of her duties as an Operational Manager of the hospital's Thuthuzela Care Center.

The country's Thuthuzela Care Centre's are facilities introduced as a critical part of South Africa's anti-rape strategy, aiming to reduce secondary trauma for the victims, to improve conviction rates and reduce the cycle time for finalising court cases. It plays a vital role in giving hope and comfort to the victims of rape and domestic violence.

"I am incredibly grateful to God for choosing me amongst many healthcare workers who do a sterling work in saving the lives of people," gushed Sister Ndlovu. She thanked her colleagues, family and friends for supporting her throughout this journey and further encouraged everyone in the public service to continue serving the people of KwaZulu-Natal with the respect and the dignity they deserve.

The KZN Department of Health congratulates her and prides itself for having an employee who has won such a prestigious award, and deservedly so, for protecting the victims of gender-based violence.



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GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING CANCERS

**Oncologist Dr Thandiswa Lusu, Oncologist
Inkosi Albert Luthuli Hospital**

Skin cancer is easy to see because it is something on your skin. If a person sees a mole that has been changing in colour, size, shape, and is itching they should seek help. Even a painless mass should be checked out, especially if it progresses in size. Not all masses are cancers but unfortunately no one can tell without the mass being investigated.

The common cancers that make up a large percentage of our patients are cervical and breast cancer in women, prostate cancer in males. These cancers can be detected very early, treated early and cured. Self-love also plays a critical role - do regular Pap smears, breast exam and a prostate-specific antigen test.

It is important for every one to know their family history of medical illnesses, including cancer. Background family history of cancer may mean that one has to be vigilant with screening. It has to start earlier than the normal population without family history. There have been patients in their twenties or thirties with advanced breast cancer, so it is not a disease that affects the old only.

It is important to know your body; breast self-examination should be a habit at least once a month. Look out for change in size, skin colour, presence of a mass and discharge from the nipple. Seek help to establish what the underlying problem might be. The clinics are usually the starting point; however, they may not have the necessary resources or skill to establish a diagnosis. Patients are consequently referred to district or regional hospitals for further investigation.

Upon arrival at the referred facility you are likely to be subjected to various tests to confirm the diagnosis. Since there are various stages of cancer, you will be notified which stage the cancer is in. The highest stage is the fourth stage, which means the cancer has spread to other parts of the body apart from where it originated. For example, a breast cancer patient would be classified as stage four if the cancer has spread to the bones.

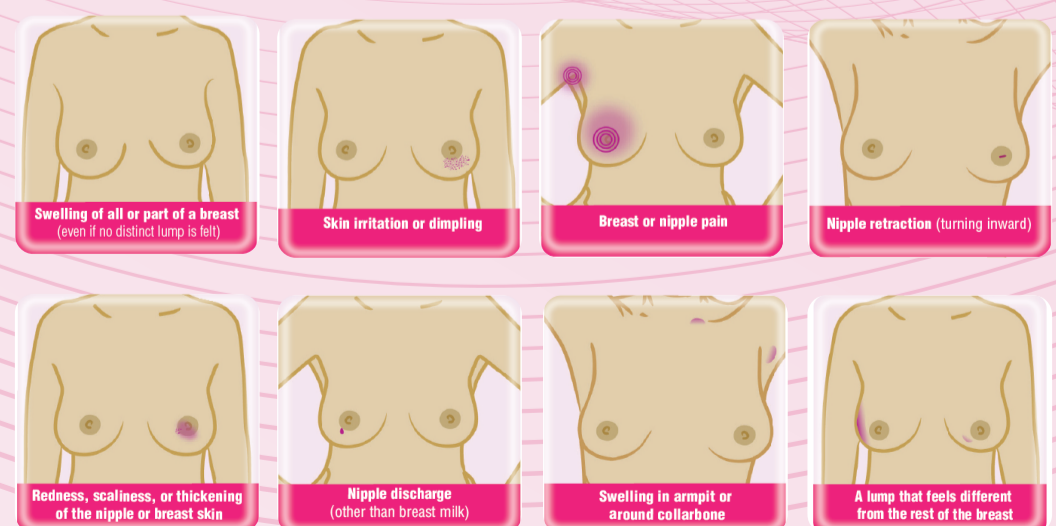
It is advisable to bring someone to support you as the patient as the diagnosis of cancer can be difficult to absorb. This person can also assist you in recalling some of the advice that the health professional shares, especially your treatment options. Breast cancer is treated with surgery, chemotherapy



(drugs), radiotherapy (intense beams of energy) and for some patients hormonal therapies. These are not done at the same time, they are sequenced and the treatment can take up almost a year.

Quite often a patient will say they thought the growth would go away or that they have sought alternative ways of getting rid of the mass according to their personal beliefs.

Remember early diagnosis facilitates better outcomes.



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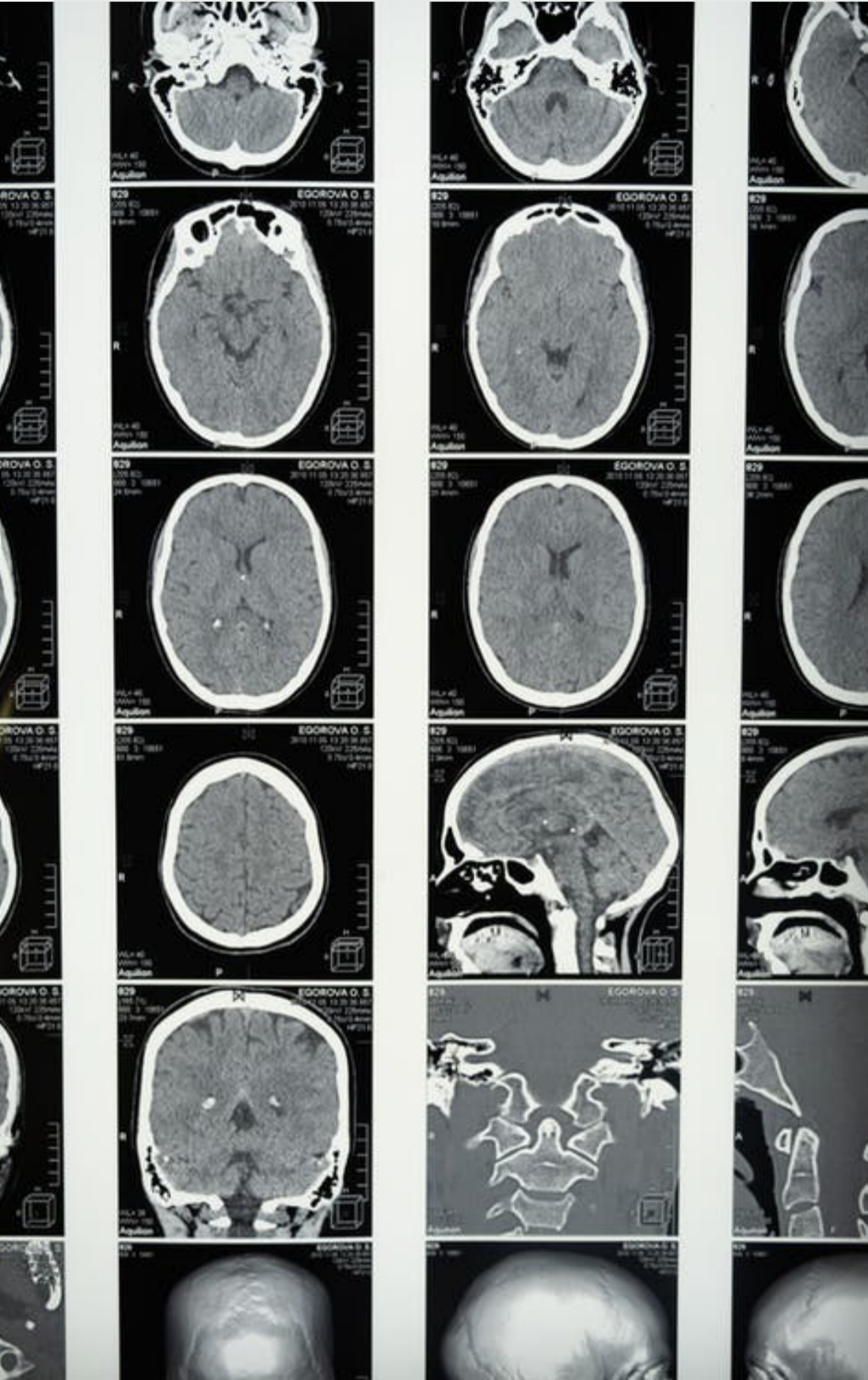


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ADHERE TO TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION TO **MINIMIZE** THE IMPACT OF STROKE



Strokes occur when the blood supply to part of the brain is cut off and without blood, which carries oxygen. As a result brain cells can be damaged or die. Depending on which part of the brain is affected and how quickly the person is treated, the effects of stroke can be devastating to a person's body, mobility, speech, as well as how they think and feel.

Stroke as an illness may not likely bring pain to one's body, however it is very important to learn about the symptoms and lifestyles that may cause your body to suffer from a stroke. When patients are cared for, supported to adhere to treatment and attend rehabilitation programmes, the negative impact of strokes can be minimised.

Stroke is treated as a general sickness and medical attention to it is available in all KwaZulu-Natal health facilities or hospitals as it has not been specialised at a particular facility, and this means patients can get help at their nearest hospital in the province. Like other

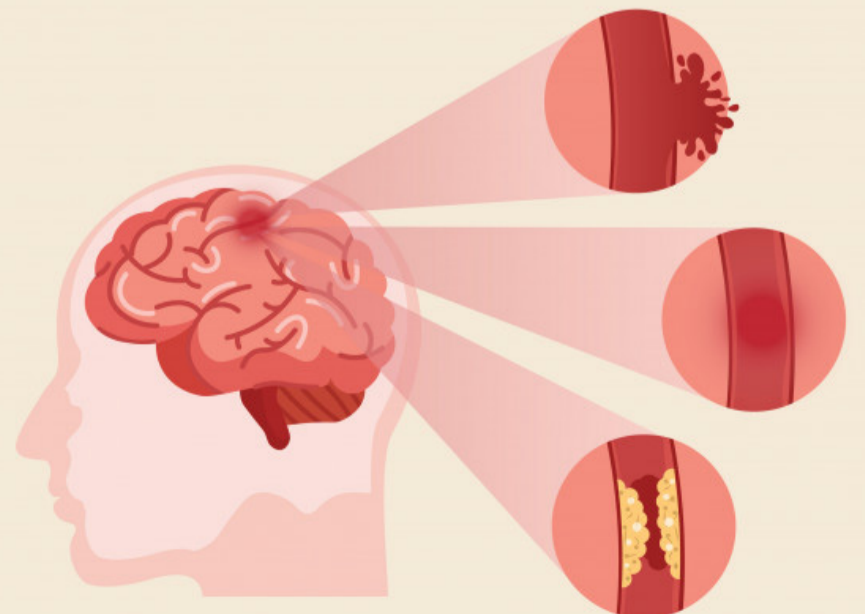
non-communicable diseases, many strokes can be prevented through lifestyle changes and taking control of health conditions that raise your risk for stroke.

These include maintaining a healthy weight, quitting smoking, reducing alcohol intake, making the right food choices (such as reducing fatty, salty and sugary food intake in favour of vegetables and fruits), daily physical activity and managing stress daily. Stroke is usually not painful, thus patients may easily ignore the symptoms and not seek medical attention in the hope that they will improve.

However, common symptoms of a stroke include sudden weakness or numbness in the face, arms or legs; loss of speech, difficulty speaking or understanding speech; loss of vision; severe or unusual headache; dizziness and trouble with walking.

All patients with stroke need to be stabilised as soon as possible while seeking urgent medical assistance.

South Africa commemorates National Stroke Week from 28 October to 3 November every year, to raise awareness about the symptoms of stroke and the importance of taking treatment for recovery. The week also highlights an important day as 29 October marks World Stroke Day.



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STAYING ACTIVE WHILE SOCIAL DISTANCING

With South Africa having been on level one since 21 September 2020, most of our normal gathering activities such as gyms, cinemas and sporting events have been resumed safely, with most establishments adhering to the precautions and health guidelines.

Physical activity is important for one's health and general well-being as it is associated with maintaining a healthy weight, reducing blood pressure and even assisting in sleeping better at night.

Whether you work out alone, at a gym or with a group of friends, observing the safety measures put in place will ensure that you protect yourself and those around you from COVID-19.

Here are some ways that you can stay physically healthy while maintaining social distancing:

- **Walking/running –** walking or running can aid in reducing your risk of COVID-19 and other illnesses, as exercise plays a role in maintaining a healthy immune system. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that adults aged 18-64 get

at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity throughout the week.

- **Online classes –** as the pandemic rages on, most businesses have had to adapt to doing things differently, this includes gyms. A lot of gyms have been including online programs and live workout classes for its members to be able to utilize in the comfort of their own homes. Online workout videos are also a plus as you can find hundreds of free workouts on the internet, ranging from beginners to advanced and low to high impact workouts.
- **Gym –** although most gyms have opened their

doors to the public, you are still encouraged to be cautious when at the gym. Try avoiding going to the gym at peak hours (in the mornings and afternoons) as that is when most people are at the gym. It is also recommended that if you are feeling unwell, for you to go to the nearest health facility instead of going to public places and possibly infecting others.

Another key to staying active is eating healthy, as the food we eat acts as fuel to our bodies, and what we eat and drink before, during and after physical activity plays a role in exercise performance and improves our recovery time.



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TOGETHER WE DEFEAT MALARIA!

From 2 to 6 November is the commemoration of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Malaria Week and SADC Malaria Day, which aim to create awareness about malaria and to mobilise the community to participate in the malaria control programmes.

This year's theme is "Community Involvement is Key to Achieving Zero Malaria" and with a slogan that says - "Together We Defeat Malaria!" for use from 2019 to 2021.

Malaria is a severe and deadly disease which can be prevented and cured if detected in time.

The public is encouraged to take part in controlling the disease in communities, especially those where malaria is prevalent.

Malaria is more prevalent in KwaZulu-Natal districts such as Mkhanyakude, King Cetshwayo and the Zululand and normally from August to January.

Before the Malaria season

- When anti-malaria teams visit your community, allow them into your house to spray.

- Indoor residual spraying kills mosquitoes that transmit malaria and is free and voluntary

- Occupants of houses are requested to move their furniture away from the walls so that their houses can be sprayed.

- After your wall has been sprayed, please wait for at least one hour before you enter your house and do not plaster, wash, or repaint walls for nine months.

During and after the Malaria Season

- Malaria can be prevented and cured: Take your malaria treatment correctly.

- If malaria is not treated in time, it can kill. Remember to take your treatment correctly, as directed by your health care practitioner

- Visit your health facility such as clinic and hospital without delay and within 24

hours when you experience any malaria-like symptoms (for example: fever, body pains, nausea, diarrhea and headache).

- A new malaria pill, primaquine, is being added to the current malaria treatment regimen in some areas of South Africa, to help reduce malaria transmission.

- Please remember that primaquine does not replace the Coartem® treatment.

- Prevent mosquitoes multiplying in your community. Ensure that all areas around your house remain clean and that there is no motionless (stagnant) water where mosquitoes can multiply.

- When you dine or socialize outdoors in the evening during warm weather, do not forget to cover bare skin and ankles where mosquitoes tend to bite.

TRAVELLERS TO MALARIA AREAS

- Travellers from non-endemic areas to malaria endemic areas and countries are vulnerable to malaria and need to take malaria chemoprophylaxis and prevent mosquito bites by using personal protections or stay indoors between 6pm & 6am. Personal protection includes: wearing long-sleeve and long-trouser clothing and socks in the evening, use of deet-based mosquito repellents, and using fans where possible.

- Higher risk groups for malaria include babies, young children, the elderly, pregnant women, people with a compromised immune system, travellers from non-endemic areas, and migrant workers.

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