According to the US CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), 795,000 Americans have a stroke every year, with 610,000 of those being first-time stroke victims and 185,000 with recurrent stroke. In other words, about one in four Americans having a stroke has already had a stroke before! This is an alarming number of repeat stroke victims and it is concerning to not only the stroke neurologist, but also to stroke victims who do not want to be part of that unfortunate statistic.

There are many possible reasons to explain this serious problem, including incomplete evaluations by physicians to identify the cause of the stroke, and unknown genetic risks, just to name a few. But at least some recurrent strokes could be prevented by patients themselves by closely adhering to their doctor’s treatment plan. There are several major factors that contribute to the risk of stroke, and these “risk factors” are the target of what the stroke neurologist refers to as “secondary stroke prevention.” The most notable of these risk factors include: high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, smoking, sedentary lifestyle, obesity, diet, and an abnormal heart rhythm known as atrial fibrillation.

What we have seen in many cases is that recurrent stroke patients, and their treating physicians, either never quite met the treatment goals or they became too relaxed in maintaining those goals over time. Missing doses of prescribed medications, stopping medications altogether, going back to smoking, gaining weight, or just not committing to the full plan are among possible contributing factors to recurrent stroke.

Consistency is just what the doctor ordered, literally speaking. By being consistent with the prescribed medication regimen and the other treatment goals, the stroke patient becomes empowered to control their own destiny. To prevent recurrent stroke, one of the best things the stroke patient can do is work with their team of doctors to make sure they understand their personalized treatment goals, and then entirely commit to the plan as recommended. Using a pillbox with dose reminders (on a mobile phone or watch), staying active (physically, mentally, & socially), and getting help from family members are all great ways to dial up a consistent regimen that will help keep away recurrent stroke. The bottom line is to stay consistent and work hard!

Click [here](https://www.strokeofinspiration.com) for more stroke facts.
New L.S. Skaggs Patient Wellness Center opens to the Public

The new L.S. Skaggs Patient Wellness Center has been created to serve patients with chronic disease and disability. This 4,000 square foot facility is located in the Ray and Tye Noorda Oral Health Sciences Building at the University of Utah Research Park. The center is an expanded service of the Stroke Wellness Program that was housed at the Rehabilitation and Wellness Clinic next door. This new facility is a collaboration between the Colleges of Health, Pharmacy, and Nursing and provides even greater resources for patients with stroke. Joining this center allows access to an individualized exercise program, educational classes such as stress management, fun classes such as boxing or dancing, and individual medication and nutrition counseling.

To access the Center’s supervised medical gym, a physical therapy evaluation (insurance reimbursed) is required from the Balance and Mobility Clinic located next door. Staff and volunteers will assist and guide you with your exercises. Annual physical therapy evaluations are performed to determine concerns and needs. This center is part of the continuum of care seeking to support stroke survivors over the long term. The goals are to support survivors’ need for continued recovery, improve cardiovascular health, reduce fall risk, provide social support and improve overall quality of life. Participants with stroke will have access to the gym from 8am to 4pm Monday, Wednesday, and Friday for a fee of $65 per month.

To contact the Skaggs Wellness Center, please call the Balance and Mobility Clinic at 801-587-9161 or ask your physician to refer you.