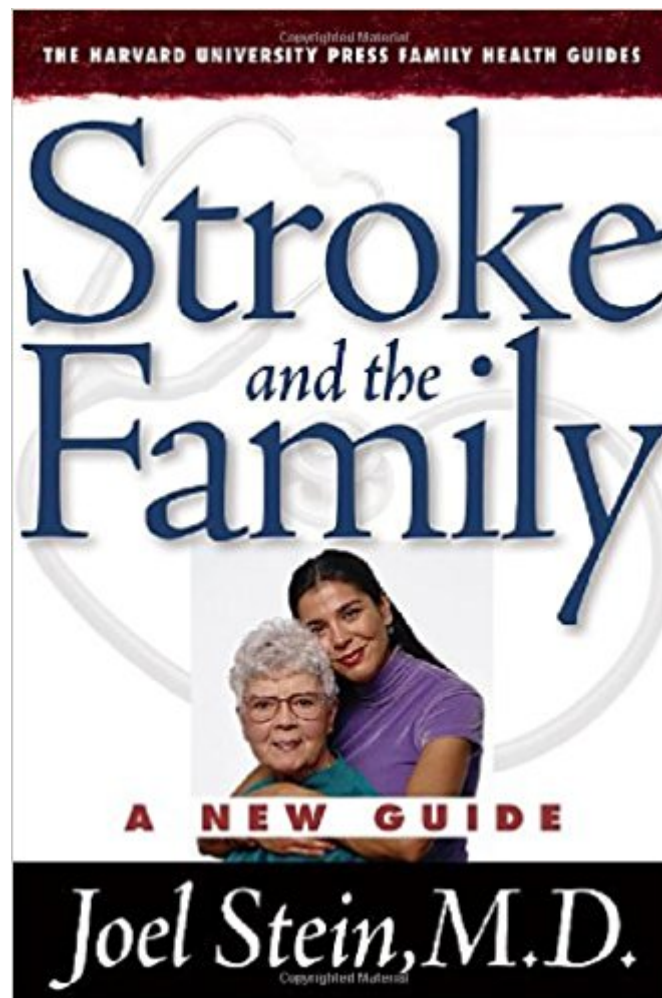




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# Stroke And The Family: A New Guide (The Harvard University Press Family Health Guides)



## Synopsis

A young woman suffers a stroke; she rebuilds her career and personal life, but not before her marriage falls apart. An eighty-year-old man dies unexpectedly of stroke, leaving his grown sons to wonder whether they are genetically predisposed to stroke. A recently retired woman confronts her future with a husband suddenly disabled by stroke. How can she help her husband? Will he ever recover? How will she cope with her own emotional stress? In *Stroke and the Family: A New Guide*, Joel Stein shows the many faces of stroke and the people it strikes. To the family just beginning to cope with the aftermath of a stroke, the diagnostic tests, drug regimens, rehabilitation strategies, and varied prognoses can be completely bewildering. Because stroke can affect memory, speech, and movement, the impact on everyday routines and close relationships can be especially intense. Stein has produced a book that allows general readers and nonphysicians working with stroke survivors to make sense of the confusing variety of diagnoses and treatment options, and goes on to explore challenges the recovering stroke patient and the recovering family will face during a long recuperation with an uncertain outcome. *Stroke and the Family* offers up-to-date information and places the current research findings in context.

## Book Information

Series: The Harvard University Press Family Health Guides (Book 4)

Paperback: 288 pages

Publisher: Harvard University Press; 1 edition (October 25, 2004)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 067401667X

ISBN-13: 978-0674016675

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.7 x 8.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 13.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 8 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,133,025 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #80 in [Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Diseases & Physical Ailments > Strokes](#) #86 in [Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Diseases & Physical Ailments > Reference](#) #381 in [Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Diseases & Physical Ailments > Physical Impairments](#)

## Customer Reviews

Joel Stein has written a comprehensive guide to stroke for patients and their families. It covers all the basics of stroke care, from prevention to returning home from hospital through rehab. Dr. Stein's

book will be a 'must' for families and patients living with the after effects of stroke. The writing is clear and easy to understand, and the information-packed text uses patient vignettes skillfully to illustrate very important issues in an engaging and humane manner. (Walter J. Koroshetz, M.D., Vice Chair, Massachusetts General Hospital Neurology Service)

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In response to a family emergency, I ordered four books on stroke recovery. Two had been recommended to me as being helpful for lay people: (1) "Living With Stroke: A Guide For Families" (Senelick, Rossi & Dougherty, 1999) and (2) "Stroke and the Family: A New Guide" (Stein, 2004). I ordered these for my family members (and myself). Two more were written at a much more scholarly, technical level for clinicians: (3) "Recovery after Stroke" (Barnes, Dobkin, & Bogousslavsky, Eds, 2005), and (4) "Stroke Rehabilitation: A Function-Based Approach" (Gillen & Burkhardt, Eds, 2004). Each of these books has much to recommend it. I hope to write reviews of all four; I've already written a review of "Living With Stroke". I can see why the first two are standouts, and have been helpful to so many people. They are well-written, concise books with plenty of important information. These books will help you quickly become an educated consumer of medical care. (They won't always familiarize you with medical controversies and choices, but they do a remarkable job of capturing the key issues. Controversies include, for instance, the use of anti-seizure meds, and the use of statins for cholesterol reduction, especially in women. Stein in particular is more likely to point out controversies, and he does point out side effects of medications, in various instances). Stein's book is easy to read and has succeeded in packing in an enormous amount of information into a 272 page paperback. Unlike "Living With Stroke," it contains a number of illustrations and photos which are helpful in understanding the brain, setting up a safe home environment, etc. It contains more (and sometimes different) information than "Living With Stroke." Toward the end, it does a nice job of discussing medical research and experimental treatments, but also makes readers aware of a wide variety of "nontraditional" treatments, such as acupuncture,

herbs, and biofeedback. The book's 20 chapters cover the following: What is a stroke?; Finding the Cause of a Stroke; Stroke prevention; How the Brain works; Medical Complications after Stroke, Recovery and Rehabilitation; Stroke in Young and Old; Impact on Marriage and Relationships; Impact on Children and Family; Return to Work and Leisure Activities; Weakness after Stroke; Loss of Sensation or Vision; Problems with Memory and Thinking; Emotional and Personality Changes; Communication Difficulties; Swallowing Difficulties; Pain and Muscle Spasms; Equipment and Home Environment; Nontraditional Treatments; Understanding Clinical Research. There is an extensive appendix on "resources and information" I believe that many people will be able to complete the book in a two or three nights. That's important when time is of the essence and you are trying to educate yourself quickly. If you are a family member and/or a caretaker: This is the book to bring with you to the hospital waiting room. Take this one, or the "Living With Stroke" book. You are likely to be waiting for long periods between visits with doctors and nurses, and you'll have many questions. You'll learn much more detailed general information from this book than the 10 minutes you spend consulting with the doc. What this book doesn't explain is how to deal with hospital staff who are busy and not always concerned with communicating with family members. But it provides plenty more. You can use this book to educate other family members and friends who might not be as thorough and bookish as you, and win them over to a sensible and realistic agenda. If you are a professional, you may find this book helpful, for a variety of reasons. First off, you might consider recommending this book, or "Living with Stroke," to your patients. Stein's book contains more, and different, information than "Living With Stroke" (I recommend both). Moreover, you might use the language in these books to explain situations and decisions to patients and their families. The authors have taken care to discuss emotionally and cognitively complex material in a sensible and clear manner.

I hoped for insight, inspiration and guidance. I got some cursory information and no inspiration. This might be a good book for someone on the outside looking in. But if you are hoping for ways others have navigated this stressful time, this isn't it. If you are simply curious about different treatment approaches and want to know what others have faced. Then, OK. But if you hope to learn how others have navigated these stormy waters and succeeded...this is very unsatisfying. Want to learn how to work together as a family? What you may need to do etc? forget it.

My husband is a 52 year old stroke survivor. I recently picked up this book at the local library and found it extremely informative. It's been 1 1/2 years since my husband's stroke and I only wish I had

found it sooner! The book is very well organized with plenty of examples of patients experiencing various changes after stroke. A must read for anyone who knows (or is) a stroke survivor!

Great information

Only ok. Not much specific info to gather from this one.

This well written book tells , in mostly plain language, just what happened, how bad it can be and how lucky you are to be as good as you are. Answers treatment questions and gives many good references. A must read for care givers.

My aunt became partially incapacitated by a stroke at the age of 55, and I took on the responsibility of assisting her in her day-to-day activities. I bought a number of books on stroke, but found this one to be by far the most comprehensive and sensitively written on the subject. Dr. Stein's book describes the wide range of severity that strokes can take and offers in-depth guidance on how best to adapt to life after stroke. I especially appreciated that the author explained the medical implications of stroke in layperson's terms that I could understand without a scientific background. If you buy one book on this subject, let this be the one -- I recommend this book without reservation to anyone whose family has been touched by stroke.

Learn the basics of stroke care, and what to expect from the hospital and rehab. This helped me understand how stroke affects people differently (speech, paralysis, etc.).After my brother suffered a stroke at 59, I've read a lot of titles on the topic. This book gives a compact overview of the causes, effects, and treatments.To supplement a book like this, I recommend reading personal accounts of stroke survivors. Those helped me understand the situation from the viewpoint of someone who had experienced it.

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