Top Ten Things To Know
Comprehensive Care of the Acute Ischemic Stroke Patient

1. Approximately 795,000 strokes occur each year with a majority of these strokes (~85%) classified as ischemic.

2. In 2007, the overall mortality rate from stroke was 273,000, making stroke the third leading cause of death in the United States.

3. Coordinated care of the acute ischemic stroke (AIS) patient results in improved outcomes, decreased lengths of stay, decreased costs, and decreased event recurrence.

4. This scientific statement is a comprehensive, evidence-based guide focusing on the coordination of care in two phases of AIS: Phase 1- emergency or hyperacute phase and Phase 2 - the acute phase.

5. Education priorities for assessment and treatment of the AIS patient in the field prior to hospital arrival highlights the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration among nurses and emergency medical technicians.

6. Assessment strategies for neurological and vital sign status should be adapted for AIS patients treated with and without thrombolysis.

7. Clinical management encompasses the prevention of the following subacute complications; infection, constipation, urinary incontinence, musculoskeletal problems, deep vein thrombosis, pulmonary embolism, skin breakdown, aspiration, and malnutrition.

8. Extensive guideline based recommendations are delineated for educating patients and families regarding secondary stroke prevention.

9. Compendium of educational resources is incorporated to enhance and reinforce patient and family teaching.

10. Topics highlighting the diverse leadership roles of nurses in enhancing stroke care include advanced nursing practice, stroke education in the community, stroke center certification and quality improvement initiatives.