



STROKE CARE

The Ultimate Gift

Richard Fein is many things to many people: husband, father, teacher and mentor to name a few.

Shown: Richard Fein, pictured with his wife Carol, poses with his hand-crafted oak furniture. Richard, who recently survived multiple strokes at RWJ, recently gave back with a generous donation to the Grateful Patient program.

And now, thanks to the expert care he received at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital's (RWJ) Comprehensive Stroke Center, he's also a stroke survivor.

Mr. Fein never imagined that he was at risk for stroke. At 72, the North Brunswick resident was always active and in good health. In his retirement, he worked as an office manager, who also tackled accounting and information technology tasks, while teaching at the local adult school, mentoring youths in his community and conducting career assessments for high school students.

His first hint that something was wrong came when severe leg pain woke him from a sound sleep. "I thought it was a cramp; I tried to get out of bed but I couldn't feel my leg," Mr. Fein recalls.

By morning, the pain subsided and Mr. Fein went to work. Three days later, when he went to lunch, he noticed his right arm was weak. Later that afternoon, Mr. Fein lacked the strength to insert a flash drive in his computer.

"I know my body and I don't abuse it, so I knew something was wrong," Mr. Fein says.

When he returned home, Mr. Fein's wife drove him to a local hospital for tests. Doctors determined that he had four minor strokes. He was admitted overnight and discharged home. Three days later, Mr. Fein had a fifth, more serious stroke.

"This time I had numbness in my right arm, right leg and I couldn't form a sentence," he recalls. Mr. Fein's case was unique due to the sheer number of strokes he experienced and because his blood flow and strength returned before his most serious brain attack.

Following a second hospital visit for an MRI and CAT scan, doctors learned that an artery carrying blood to Mr. Fein's brain was blocked, causing the strokes. He was transferred to RWJ, because it is a Comprehensive Stroke Center equipped with the technology and expertise to deal with serious cases like Mr. Fein's.

Mr. Fein was referred by Roger Behar, MD, an attending neurologist at RWJ, who is affiliated with Princeton & Rutgers Neurology, to Sudipta Roychowdhury, MD, Clinical Assistant Professor of Radiology at RWJMS and an attending Neurointerventional Radiologist at RWJ and Irwin Keller, MD, Clinical Professor of Radiology at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School (RWJMS) and an attending Neurointerventional Radiologist and Endovascular Neurointerventional Surgeon at RWJ, who inserted an intracranial stent

to open the blocked artery and restore blood flow.

Before inserting the stent, Drs. Keller, and Roychowdhury, injected the clot-busting drug tPA in the blocked artery to soften the clot. The stent is delivered through a narrow catheter, which is led through a small incision in the groin through the arteries and to the blocked artery. This stent is self-expanding, so doctors can open and position it without a balloon, making it easier to navigate through the brain's narrow arteries.

"When it comes to stroke- time is brain," Dr. Keller explains. "We have been working as a Comprehensive Stroke Center team for almost a decade and there have been many advances in this field. If you get here soon enough, we have the capability to reverse the symptoms and potentially return patients to an active, healthy life."

Following the procedure, blood flow returned to Mr. Fein's brain, feeling returned to his arm and leg and he could speak again. He required minimal physical rehabilitation before returning home.

Mr. Fein is in awe of the excellent, compassionate care he received from the Stroke Center team and is inspired to give back. He recently made a \$10,000 Grateful Patient donation to the RWJUH Foundation to establish a scholarship fund for nurses and other allied professionals who care for stroke patients at RWJ to continue their education.

"I did the impossible with RWJ's help," Mr. Fein notes. "Now it's my chance to spread the word and help save someone else's life."

Visit www.rwjuh.edu/stroke or call 1-888-MD-RWJUH.



Shown above: Irwin Keller, MD, Clinical Professor of Radiology at UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and an attending Neurointerventional Radiologist and Endovascular Neurointerventional Surgeon at RWJ are both physicians with University Radiology Group.

THE GRATEFUL PATIENT PROGRAM AT RWJ

It could have been a special doctor, a team of talented nurses, or a skilled physical therapist that made a difference in the care that you or a loved one received at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital and a gift to our Grateful Patient Program is a wonderful way to say "thank you."

The Program is a chance to honor the compassionate caregivers who touched your life... and help them bring healing and hope to even more patients and their families. Donations can be made for special staff members in support of one of the hospital's planned projects or a general foundation fund.

Donate online at www.rwjuh.edu/gratefulpatient or call 732-937-8750.



Shown at left: Sudipta Roychowdhury, MD, Clinical Assistant Professor of Radiology at UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and an attending Neurointerventional Radiologist at RWJ.