



# *News Release*

## ***Baptist Downtown and Baptist Heart Hospital Participate in “Get With The Guidelines”<sup>SM</sup> to Improve Stroke Care American Stroke Association’s Get With The Guidelines<sup>SM</sup> Program Promotes Guideline Adherence that Saves Lives***

*Jacksonville, Florida, January 26, 2006* – Baptist Medical Center Downtown and Baptist Heart Hospital are participating in the American Stroke Association’s “Get With The Guidelines – Stroke” initiative. The goal of the program is to improve the overall quality of care for stroke patients by improving acute stroke treatment and preventing future strokes and cardiovascular events.

“Get With The Guidelines – Stroke” was developed to help hospitals employ proven science-based treatment guidelines, including those developed by the American Stroke Association, American Heart Association and Brain Attack Coalition. These guidelines address acute stroke management, primary prevention of cardiovascular diseases, secondary prevention of strokes and the establishment of primary stroke centers.

As a “Get With The Guidelines – Stroke” participating hospital, Baptist Downtown has been encouraged to develop a comprehensive system for providing rapid diagnosis and treatment of stroke when patients are admitted to the Emergency Center. This includes being equipped 24 hours a day, seven days a week to provide brain imaging scans, making neurologists available to conduct patient evaluations and using clot-busting medications when appropriate.

Baptist Downtown and Baptist Heart Hospital are also increasing its efforts to prevent secondary strokes through the aggressive use of medications such as statins and anti-platelets as indicated in the secondary stroke prevention guidelines. Other methods include the treatment of atrial fibrillation and atherosclerosis and management of smoking cessation, weight, exercise, diabetes, and cholesterol.

Through “Get With The Guidelines – Stroke,” the American Stroke Association provides Baptist Downtown with training and staffing recommendations, care maps, discharge protocols, standing orders, data-collection

and measurement tools. The program also facilitates creating and sharing best practices among participating hospitals.

The time is right for Baptist Downtown to implement “Get With The Guidelines – Stroke.” The number of acute ischemic stroke patients eligible for treatment is expected to grow over the next decade due to increasing stroke incidence and a large aging population. Each year, about 700,000 people suffer a stroke — 500,000 are first attacks and 200,000 are recurrent. Of stroke survivors, 22 percent of men and 25 percent of women die within a year, and for those aged 65 and older, the percentage is even higher. In 1999, \$3.4 billion was paid to Medicare beneficiaries discharged from short-stay hospitals for stroke. Americans paid about \$51 billion in 2003 for stroke-related medical costs and disability.

The American Stroke Association offers a wide array of programs, products and services, from patient education materials to scientific statements with cutting-edge information for healthcare professionals. The organization is committed to remaining the leader in providing credible stroke information to individuals and healthcare providers. For more information about the American Stroke Association or its initiatives, visit [StrokeAssociation.org](http://StrokeAssociation.org) or call 1-888-4-STROKE. For more information about “Get With The Guidelines – Stroke,” e-mail us at [guidelinesinfo@heart.org](mailto:guidelinesinfo@heart.org) or visit [www.strokeassociation.org/getwiththeguidelines](http://www.strokeassociation.org/getwiththeguidelines).

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*Baptist Health is a faith-based, mission-driven system comprised of Baptist Medical Center Downtown, Baptist Heart Hospital, Baptist Medical Center Beaches, Baptist Medical Center Nassau; Baptist Medical Center South and Wolfson Children’s Hospital -- Jacksonville’s only children’s hospital. Baptist Health also includes cardiology and cardiovascular surgery services, a comprehensive cancer center, orthopaedic institute, women’s resource center, a full range of psychology and psychiatry services, outpatient facilities and a network of primary care physicians’ offices throughout Northeast Florida. Baptist Health is the official healthcare provider for the Jacksonville Jaguars.*

