

## Press Release

### **Orange Park Medical Center Stroke Care Program awarded Joint Commission certification**

The Joint Commission sets higher standards than the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services in addressing the delivery of safe, quality patient care.

**Orange Park, FL – August 3, 2009:** Orange Park Medical Center was awarded the Gold Seal of Approval from The Joint Commission for a Primary Stroke Center. Tom Pentz, CEO, Orange Park Medical Center (OPMC) praised *“his team’s sense of urgency and drive for quality which brought about this highly sought after certification”*. Strokes are the third most common killer of Americans and the leading cause of permanent disability. A delay in treatment can mean the difference between life or death and level of disability. It is estimated that every minute you wait for treatment equals two million brain cells lost. Kathy Hester, Chief Nursing Officer of OPMC states, *“We are pleased the Joint Commission has recognized we are ready and able to provide the highest quality of care to those unfortunate enough to suffer from a stroke. Time is crucial in the treatment of strokes and with this certification our facility is able to start treatment in those few precious minutes following the onset of signs and symptoms.”* A large team from administration, physicians, nursing, radiology and emergency medical services worked together to meet the American Stroke Association’s and Joint Commission’s guidelines for the treatment of stroke. OPMC offers a streamlined approach to stroke care with the upmost priority given to all acute stroke patients. Dr. Mark Spatola, Chief, Section of Neurological Surgery and Medical Director for the Stroke Program, affirms, *“The Joint Commission Certification of the Stroke Program, highlights the state of the art care that is being provided at OPMC for the diagnosis and treatment of stroke. Early treatment can be crucial in the success of treatment of stroke in preventing and reversing permanent neurological deficit, and this provides the population of Clay County the care they need, without having to travel elsewhere wasting valuable time This Certification is a crowning achievement of a committed and collaborative team from across all service lines at OPMC.”*

## Stroke Warning Signs & Risk Factors

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### Warning Signs

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or loss of coordination
- A sudden, severe, unexplainable headache, often described as "the worst headache of my life"

### Risk Factors

- Over 55 years of age
- Previous stroke
- Family history of stroke
- High cholesterol or high blood pressure
- Heart disease, particularly atrial fibrillation
- Excessive alcohol consumption
- Diabetes
- Carotid artery disease
- African-American
- Smoking
- Obesity
- Lack of exercise