

LIGHTNING DATA CENTER
DECEMBER 8, 2006
MINUTES
ST. ANTHONY CENTRAL HOSPITAL, DENVER
www.stanthonyldc.org

Quote of the Month:

“Human science no longer experiences the world through human senses. Indeed, much of scientific knowledge these days completely contradicts our senses, which is why it is so difficult to accept such concepts as quantum mechanics and curved space.”

K.C.Cole, Sympathetic Vibrations 1985

1. Meeting began at 11:30 am and adjourned at 1:15 pm.
2. Members present: Cherington, R Gift, Y Gift, Flanders, McDonough, Nibbe, Nitka, Skeen, Stewart, Wachtel, Wallace, Wells, Yarnell.
3. I brought the following article (abstracted in part here):
 - a. Rivera J et al. Severe stunned myocardium after lightning strike. Crit Care Med 2006. From Pub Med {Epub ahead of print}

“42 year old woman who was hit by lightning developed rapid and progressive hemodynamic deterioration manifest by cardiogenic shock. Two days later, echocardiographic signs of systolic and diastolic dysfunction improved markedly. Lightning strikes may cause serious contractile dysfunction in the absence of irreversible myocardial injury.”
4. It was good to have Greg Stewart attend today’s meeting. He has been on a sabbatical in New England. Greg reported on his continuing work on Safety Guidelines. Al Nibbe and Phil Yarnell suggested that he focus on Safety Guidelines with special attention to Colorado issues. Ernie Nitka suggested that as many as 40% of people enjoying the outdoors in Colorado ignore safety recommendations during dangerous weather. He believes more work need be done to get out the message.

Most of us advised Greg to invite recognized authorities on the subject of lightning safety to work with him on this project. Greg stated that he will contact Mary Ann Cooper, Ron Holle, Phil Krider, Martin Uman, and others.

5. Al Nibbe asked if we have a “lightning fact sheet” that we could present to the local media when they approach us on lightning matters. Bob Wallace said that currently we direct the media to information on the web including the websites of the National Weather Service, Mary Ann Cooper, Ron Holle, etc. LDC might undertake a new project: preparing a brochure for the media and others that tells about our activities.
6. Bob Gift announced that at 6:30 am the radio stations reported that a “green flash” was seen in the skies over Denver. He told us that local radio stations were offering two tickets to the next Bronco football game to anyone who happened to capture these meteor showers on videotape.
7. The title of today’s presentation: “How little I know about lightning— discussions with a practicing neurologist.” That practicing neurologist was Ernest Nitka, MD. Ernie’s presentation was superb. He uses a Socratic format to lead the discussion. He asked thought-provoking clinical questions such as: What clinical signs are “specific” to lightning injuries. What clinical disturbances are never seen in lightning cases? How does one know if delayed syndromes were caused by lightning? Are imaging tests (functional MRI; PET scans; SPECT; etc.) adequate in providing answers to questions such as the cause of the delayed conditions?
8. Beginning with the January 2007 meeting, LDC moves into a new era. After nearly 15 years of being the moderator for LDC meetings, I shall pass the gavel onto other members who take over the role of moderator. I look forward to seeing the new directions. I plan to remain active in LDC (writing articles, participating in discussions, etc.). LDC future programs are now in the capable hands of Mike Foley, Al Nibbe, Phil Yarnell, Gil McDonough and others on the Administrative committee.
9. These minutes do not represent official positions of LDC. They simply reflect the comments of members present at the meeting.
10. Next meeting: 11:30 am Friday, January 12, 2007 in the Main Auditorium of St. Anthony Central Hospital.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Cherington, MD