

## Beware BPSS

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**LONDON (September 19, 1997 06:27 a.m. EDT)** - British doctors warned Friday about a little-known danger of visiting the hairdresser after a 42-year-old woman suffered a stroke while having her hair washed.

The condition known as "beauty-parlor syndrome" occurred when, she stretched her head backward over the sink and damaged the carotid artery in her neck.

"This practice is not without risk," Dr. David Bateman of the Royal United Hospital in Bath said in a letter to the Lancet medical journal.

"Hairdressers should be instructed not to over-extend the neck and should use the cushion usually provided. "

The 42-year-old woman noticed a stiffness in her leg when she left the hairdresser.

Within two hours of leaving she was unsteady on her feet and the next day she woke up with numbness around her face and left arm and had slurred speech.

Doctors who examined her in hospital found that the lining of one of the arteries in her neck had torn away and was blocking the passage of blood to her brain.

Within six months after the stroke, the woman had made an almost complete recovery but still had some weakness in her arm and hand, Bateman said.

"Carotid-artery and vertebral-artery dissection are increasingly recognized as a cause of stroke in younger people," he added.

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