



**Christine Trani**  
Creative Director  
Equitable Resolutions

## LIFE LINE SCREENING – FOLLOW UP

**E**quiline ran an article last month on Life Line Screening, a preventive health benefit available at a discount to all Equitable agents, employees and policyowners. These simple, painless, ultrasound screenings can reveal dangerous plaque buildup or blockage in arteries that could lead to stroke, aneurysm and vascular disease. Life Line Screening was performing the service in my area, and I scheduled myself to see what the tests were like.

Life Line Screening arrived by van and set up at a local meeting facility. As one of the first appointments, I got there early and was amazed at how quickly the group got things organized and operational. I was greeted by a friendly staff member, and the check-in was fast, with simple paperwork, some general health questions and no hitches.

Partitions divided the area into private stations for testing, with chairs and examination tables, although there was no real need for privacy. Most of the tests use ultrasound at various points on the body: the arms and ankles, the neck, the abdomen, and the only clothing I had to remove were shoes and socks. Blood pressure cuffs were attached to arms and ankles for one session. Another used EKG electrodes (applied just below the neck) to measure cardio rhythm for irregular heartbeat.

Each test only took a few minutes, and I was escorted from station to station and introduced to the staff member performing that screening. Total testing time was about an hour. The only part that was even remotely “painful” was the finger stick to draw blood to check kidney function. This test also required an 8-hour fast, but since my appointment was first thing, this had not been a problem. My height, weight and waistline were measured.

The entire procedure was professional and efficient. The staff, who could not have been more courteous, were not allowed to report test results, but they could tell me that everything appeared “non-urgent.” Fine by me. Since nothing appeared “life-threatening,” my test results would be mailed to me after being carefully reviewed by board-certified physicians. I should have them in about 21 days.

The risk of suffering a stroke is high – it affects 1 in 6 men and 1 in 5 women – and takes a terrible toll on families.

Many people who have had a stroke experienced no prior symptoms or warning signs. That’s why so many doctors have recommended Life Line Screening to their patients. Last year alone, over 10,000 Life Line Screening customers reported that their doctors recommended Life Line Screening.

Globally, cardiovascular disease is the number one cause of death. Stroke is the fourth. The good news is that 80% of strokes can be prevented, according to the National Stroke Association.

Life Line Screening’s mission is to make people aware of the existence of previously undetected health problems and guide them to seek follow-up care with their own doctors. These screenings help people know where they stand so they can take action to intervene early. This is the idea of preventive health.

“We believe in prevention,” says Colin Scully, Chief Executive Officer of Life Line Screening. “We believe in knowledge. We believe in straightforward facts and a simple call to action. Our intention is not to scare or exaggerate – but to inform. Together we can help prevent stroke, heart attack, osteoporosis and the devastating effects of diabetes.”

With insurance and health care costs on the rise, taking steps to prevent disease makes sense.

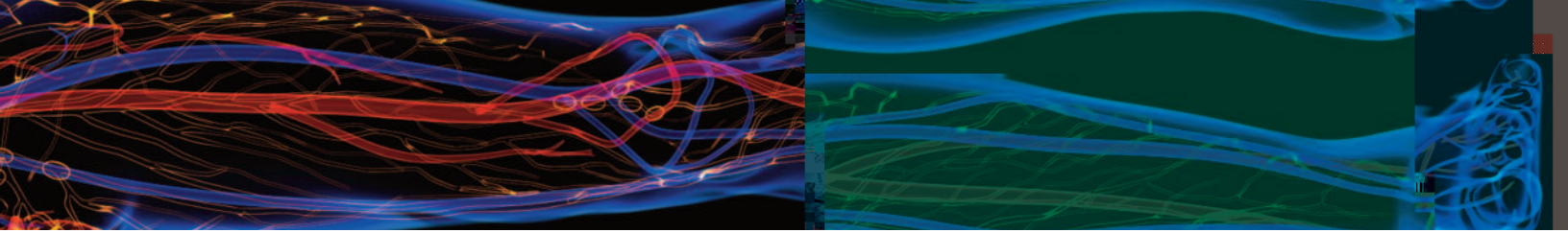
Go to [www.LifeLineScreening.com/Equitable](http://www.LifeLineScreening.com/Equitable) to find when and where Life Line Screening will be holding a clinic or to schedule a test; or **call 800-691-2708** (Equitable’s private number for Life Line Screening) and mention code **BMGW-053** to get the discounted \$145 screening rate.

### Questions and Answers about Life Line Screening

#### **Q. Who needs to be screened?**

**A.** Anyone over 50 who wants to be proactive about their health. The National Stroke Association (NSA) states that your risk of stroke doubles each decade after age 55.

However, if you have a family history of stroke or heart disease, or if you have high risk factors such as being overweight, high cholesterol, smoking, or lack of exercise, you may wish to be screened, even if you are in your 40s.



### The Screenings

#### 1. Stroke/Carotid Artery Screening

Ultrasound evaluation of the carotid arteries that screens for buildup of fatty plaque – a leading cause of strokes.

#### 2. Heart Rhythm Screening (Atrial Fibrillation)

A quick and easy test using EKG electrodes placed on the arms and legs to identify the presence or absence of an irregular heartbeat. Atrial Fibrillation increases the risk of stroke 5 times.

#### 3. Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening

Ultrasound is used to screen for the presence of an aneurysm (enlargement) in the abdominal aorta that could lead to a ruptured aorta.

#### 4. Chronic Kidney Disease Screening

A simple finger-stick blood test that checks kidney function. Early stage kidney disease often goes undetected without symptoms. People who have kidney disease also have an increased chance of developing heart problems.

#### 5. Peripheral Arterial Disease Screening

Evaluates for peripheral arterial disease (plaque buildup) in the lower extremities. It is 4 to 5 times more likely you will die from heart disease if you have peripheral arterial disease.

#### 6. Osteoporosis Risk Assessment

An ultrasound measurement of the heel bone to determine abnormal bone mass density in men and women. Osteoporosis is painless and silent in its early stages. ▼

### Q. When will I learn the results?

A. If we find a condition that is life-threatening, we will notify you on the day of the screenings, so you can consult your physician immediately (in most states). If not, then your screening will be carefully reviewed by one of our board certified physicians, and you will receive your results within 21 days.

### Q. What do health professionals say?

A. We encourage you to ask your doctor about preventive health screenings and what they can tell about your health.

### Q. Should I wait for health care reform?

A. Please don't. The biggest changes are not due to start until 2014. And there are no plans to include screenings or any other preventive vascular tests.

### Q. Can't my doctor do these screenings?

A. Most physicians can only order these tests if you are experiencing symptoms. They are usually not able to order them as a preventive measure because insurance typically won't cover it. Our goal is to identify individuals with significant disease before a problem occurs.

### Q. How much does it cost?

A. As an Equitable agent, policyowner or employee, you can receive screenings for a special price of \$145. To find when and where Life Line Screening will be holding a clinic or to schedule a screening, call 1-800-691-2708 (Equitable's private number for Life Line Screening) or go to [www.LifeLineScreening.com/Equitable](http://www.LifeLineScreening.com/Equitable). Use code **BMGW-053** to get the Equitable discount.

