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MRS. NIXON BEGINS EXERCISE THERAPY

A Slow but Total Recovery From Stroke Predicted

LONG BEACH, Calif., July 12 (UPI)—Pat Nixon has started rehabilitation exercises to help her damaged muscles and may achieve "total recovery" from her paralyzing stroke, but it will take a long time, her physician reported today.

Mrs. Nixon, 64 years old, will be released from Long Beach Memorial Hospital in a week to 10 days, barring a relapse or complications, said the physician, Dr. John Lungren.

Mrs. Nixon was described as "an excellent patient" and "a very independent individual" but "very cooperative."

She suffered the cerebral stroke last Wednesday at the family home in San Clemente. Her husband, former President Richard M. Nixon, was not aware of the stroke until the next morning.

Dr. Lungren said to reporters this morning: "Though Mrs. Nixon's condition remains serious, she appears to be stabilizing satisfactorily. She still is experiencing some motor weakness in the left arm, left leg and left side of the face. However, there has been some improvement in speech and her elevated blood pressure remains under control."

Weakness Will Continue

Dr. Lungren was asked if Mrs. Nixon could achieve total recovery.

"I would put 'total recovery' in quotes," he replied. "She may have periods of slugged speech and weakness of the extremities. Ultimately she will get full recovery but it will be a slow, protracted period."

Dr. Lungren also said it would take three or four months to achieve "significant recovery." An important plus factor, he said, was that Mrs. Nixon's spirits were high.

"Most important in neurological disease is the question of depression because the recovery period is so slow," he said. "She has been told to do certain motions—hand exercises, etc."

The "worst area" is Mrs. Nixon's left arm, which Dr. Lungren described as "very weak." Some improvement was noted in the left side of her body in an examination this morning, he said.

"The whole point of the rehabilitation program to me," he said, "is to prevent contraction of the muscles and keep them in good working order until the actual function comes back."

Mr. Nixon, who underwent surgery for phlebitis in the same hospital almost a year ago, noted that his wife was in the same room he had occupied.

"Maybe it's a lucky room," he said.

The former President and his daughters, Julie Eisenhower and Tricia Cox, visit the hospital daily, driving from the San Clemente home, which is 50 miles south of Long Beach.