

TIAS (WARNING STROKES OR MINI-STROKES)

TIA's

Although the signs do not last long, a TIA (also known as a warning stroke, or mini-stroke) is very serious. It means there is a problem linked with a high risk of stroke.

Transient Ischaemic Attacks or TIA's (warning strokes or mini-strokes)

A TIA is the same as a stroke, except that the signs last for a short amount of time and no longer than 24 hours.

Although the signs do not last long, a TIA is very serious. It means there is a problem linked with a high risk of stroke. More than one in 12 people will have a stroke within a week after a TIA.

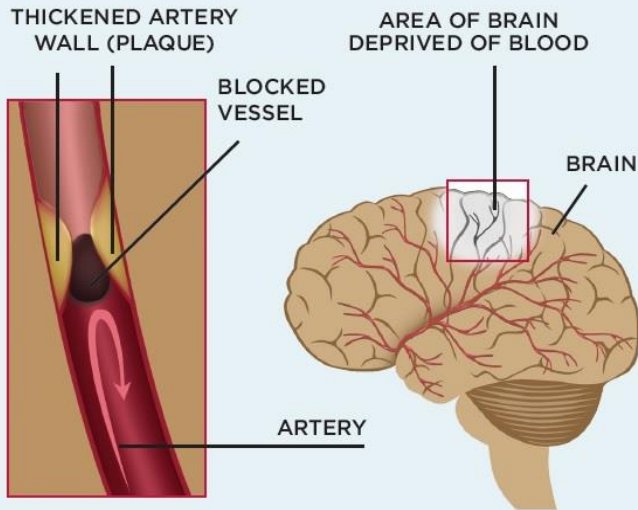
Because of this, a TIA is often called a warning stroke or mini-stroke. It shouldn't be ignored.

Cause of a TIA

In most cases TIA is caused by a blockage of blood supply to the brain. This blockage, which is temporary, is usually a clot. The clot then either dissolves or moves. After this the blood supply to the brain returns to normal and the signs disappear. TIA is not usually caused by bleeding in the brain.

TEMPORARY BLOCKAGE IN BRAIN CAUSING A TIA

Blood supply in brain is blocked or insufficient



Signs of a TIA

[Learning the FAST message](#) will help you see the signs of a TIA and stroke.

There is no way of knowing if the signs are TIA or stroke. If you experience any one of these signs, or see someone with these signs, call 111 immediately.

Getting help fast can reduce brain damage and give someone a better chance of recovery.

Diagnosis

A suspected TIA is a medical emergency. A person with signs should be taken to hospital immediately.

TIA diagnosis is based on:

- understanding what signs occurred
- thorough medical assessment including blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar tests
- results of head scans and
- other relevant examinations and tests.

Treatment

Medication can help reduce the risk of stroke and improve your health.

Medications prescribed after a TIA work in different ways. They may:

- make blood less sticky. Anti-platelet medication e.g. aspirin, clopidogrel
- prevent fatty deposits from building up. Cholesterol lowering medication e.g. simvastatin, atorvastatin
- lower blood pressure e.g. cilazapril, quinapril, others
- thin blood to prevent clotting e.g. warfarin or dabigatran.

It's important to take your medication as prescribed by your doctor. Never stop taking it without talking to your doctor.

Risk of a stroke after a TIA

A TIA is a sign that there is a problem with the blood supply to the brain. Anyone who has had a TIA is at an increased risk of stroke. The greatest risk of having a stroke is within the first few days after a TIA. This is why it's important to call an ambulance and seek immediate medical help if any stroke signs develop.

Specialised treatment with 'clot busting medication' can be given for some strokes. Act FAST because time is a crucial factor for this treatment to be considered.



TIPS TO BETTER HEALTH

Here are some quick and simple ways to reduce your risk of stroke:



EAT LESS SALT

Salt increases blood pressure. Reduce intake of takeaways, processed foods like bacon, sausages, corned beef, instant noodles or adding salt to food.



EAT MOSTLY FRESH 'WHOLE' FOODS

Share and enjoy home-cooked meals with your whānau and friends using fruit, vegetables, oats, pasta, rice, legumes (e.g. chickpeas, lentils, kidney beans), eggs, fish, chicken, lean meat, unsalted nuts, milk and yoghurt, which are all naturally low in salt, saturated fats and sugar.



BE A LABEL DETECTIVE

Compare packaged foods and choose those lowest in sodium (salt), sugar and saturated fats. Look for foods labelled 'low or reduced sodium or salt' or 'no added salt.'



BE SMOKEFREE

Quitting smoking will reduce your risk of a stroke. Contact Quitline for help to quit: 0800 778 778.



MOVE MORE

Increase the amount of exercise you do with activities like walking, swimming or playing tennis.



KEEP YOUR ALCOHOL INTAKE LOW

Drink sensibly and in moderation.



MANAGE YOUR STRESS LEVELS

Recognise and take action against your stress. Your doctor will also be able to recommend ways of coping with stress.

Try to do one of these each month to get started on the road to better health.

Driving after a TIA

A TIA doesn't usually have an impact on day to day activities. However a person who had a TIA shouldn't drive for at least one month, because of the risk of a stroke occurring after TIA. A doctor must give a medical clearance before you can drive again.

TIA information, advice and support

Stroke Foundation of New Zealand

0800 78 76 53 - free phone for advice and link with community stroke advisors

Healthline 24 hour telephone advice

0800 61 11 16

Other sources of information:

Stroke Association UK

www.stroke.org.uk

National Stroke Foundation Australia

www.strokefoundation.com.au

American Stroke Association USA

www.strokeassociation.org