



General Information

Transient Ischemic Attacks (TIAs), also known as mini strokes, are brief episodes of neurological disturbances caused by reduced blood supply to an area of the brain. These disturbances do not leave permanent damage. Symptoms usually occur suddenly, and are like a stroke and do not last long. Most TIA symptoms disappear within an hour but may persist up to 24 hours. Once you have had a TIA, you are at risk for a stroke. A stroke can result in permanent damage to the brain. It is very important that you follow up with your doctor and follow the discharge instructions. Refer to your *Discharge Instructions Sheet* for your doctor's name and phone number to make an appointment. Keep all follow up appointments. While all strokes cannot be prevented, below are some key points that may help decrease your risk.

Lifestyle Changes

• Medications Prescribed by the Physician

Take medications as prescribed. Certain medications have been proven to improve blood flow, such as:

1. **Antiplatelet Medications** help prevent clots from forming.
Ex: Aspirin, Clopidogrel (Plavix), extended release Dipyridamole (Aggrenox)
2. **Anticoagulant Medications** help prevent clots from forming if you have heart conditions such as irregular heart beat (atrial fibrillation or atrial flutter) or heart valve replacement.
Ex: Coumadin (Warfarin), Heparin

• High Blood Pressure

Have your blood pressure checked and treated if it is high. It is the most important risk factor for stroke that can be controlled with proper treatment. Follow the physician's instructions regarding medications and diet.

• High Blood Cholesterol

High cholesterol causes plaque buildup or fat in your blood vessels, which increases your risk of stroke. Follow the physician's medication/diet instructions to lower the numbers.

• Quit Smoking

For help, visit www.smokefree.gov or call your local quit hotline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

• Maintain a Healthy Weight

Speak with the physician about how to maintain or achieve a healthy weight.

• Diabetes

Controlling blood sugar levels helps prevent further damage to your blood vessels. Follow medication and/or diet instructions.

• Avoid Alcohol

Large amounts of alcohol can increase your blood pressure.

• Atrial Fibrillation

Atrial Fibrillation is an irregular heart rhythm that puts you at risk for blood clots that could lead to a stroke. Taking medications as ordered is important to prevent bleeding problems and help prevent/decrease clots from forming.

KNOW YOUR ZONE

Which zone are you in today?

ALL CLEAR/GOAL ZONE

Your symptoms are under control and you do not have any of the signs listed in the yellow or red zones below.

CAUTION/WARNING ZONE

Call your physician if you:

- Have side effects or concerns about your medications.
- Need help with managing risk factors for stroke prevention.

EMERGENCY ZONE

Call 911 if you suddenly have any of the following:

- Weakness/numbness of the face, arm, leg or on both sides of the body
- Dimness or loss of vision in one eye or double vision
- Loss of speech, trouble talking or understanding speech
- Severe headaches
- Unexplained dizziness, difficulty with balance, unsteadiness or sudden falls, especially along with any of the previous symptoms