
*Further help and
information:*

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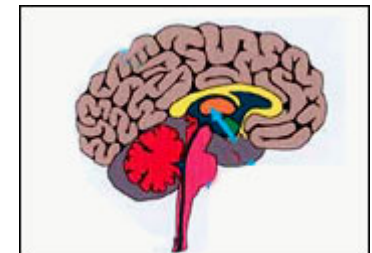
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THE HEDON GROUP PRACTICE

A BRIEF GUIDE TO

**STROKES
AND
TRANSIENT
ISCHAEMIC
ATTACKS**



*This leaflet has been produced
for the patients of The Hedon
Group Practice*

What is a Stroke or a Transient Ischaemic Attack?

A stroke or a transient ischemic attack (TIA) happens when the blood supply to the brain is interrupted and part of the brain stops functioning. The effects of a stroke can vary depending on the precise area of the brain affected, but the same principles apply to most cases.

The two most important aspects of care are firstly to minimise the impact of any damage that has been done, and secondly to reduce the chance of a further stroke happening.

Regaining Function

Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists are the experts in this field, and they will see all but the most mild stroke patients while they are in hospital. It is



very important that you continue to follow their advice while at home. If you keep trying to use the affected part of your body you will find that your abilities continue to improve for several months and you should try to be as independent as possible. Even if it does seem easier for someone else to help you, try to do things for yourself if you possibly can, and if you are caring for someone who has had a stroke, encourage them to do things for themselves, even if it takes a little longer time

It is also important that you maintain your general health by physical exercise and a good diet, and you should be very careful not to put on weight. Sometimes after a stroke people can find they are not as

'sharp' as they used to be, or might find it hard to remember names or events. Just like with physical problems, the more you try to exercise your mind the more you should find things improving.

Depression can be quite common after a stroke, and occasionally people can find it hard to hide their emotions, perhaps getting tearful watching the news. This can be particularly difficult for men. If you think you are affected please discuss it with your Doctor.

Preventing Recurrence

Most stroke patients have some of the identified risk factors for arteriosclerosis, which is the degeneration of blood vessels which causes most strokes. By reducing these risk factors we can substantially reduce the risk of a second stroke.

- **Stopping smoking.** If you smoke, it is vital that you stop. We have many ways to help, and would be happy to discuss these with you.
- **Controlling blood pressure.** Once a person has had a stroke, we do like to keep the blood pressure as low as possible, and most patients need tablets to help us achieve this.
- **Lowering cholesterol.** You should be on a low fat diet, as this will help with weight control as well as reducing your cholesterol. We would not like your cholesterol to be above 5, and many patients will be given a tablet to help reach this target.



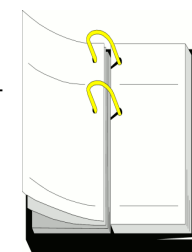
- **Thinning the blood.** The most common way to prevent the blood forming clots is to give a small dose of aspirin every day. If you have had problem with indigestion with aspirin in the past it may

be given with another tablet to prevent this. Two other medications used in particular cases are Clopidogrel (Plavix) and Warfarin.

Long Term Follow up

Because you have had a stroke, you should have a review of your health once a year and we would ask you to contact the surgery for yourself at this time.

We would like you to make two appointments; the first one should be with a Healthcare Assistant to have a blood test performed. Unless you are a diabetic needing insulin injections, it is best this test is done fasting, that is having had nothing to eat or drink apart from water from midnight the night before.



The second appointment should be with one of our specially trained nurses to discuss the results of the blood tests, and to have a general check-up, about one week after the blood test.

If you are on tablets for high blood pressure, we would advise you to have this checked every six months, and our Healthcare Assistants will be pleased to do this for you, and you also should have a 'flu jab' every autumn.

Finally....

We do appreciate how worrying it can be to have a stroke. But with regular follow up, with both ourselves and yourself playing our respective parts, we can make sure that existing problems are minimised and that your chance of a further stroke is substantially reduced.