

Cerebrovascular accident (stroke)

CVA is also known as apoplexy, cerebral infarction, intracerebral hemorrhage, or ictus. It appears when a part of the brain is suddenly deprived of blood because a blood vessel is either obstructed (cerebral ischemia) or ruptured (cerebral hemorrhage). A stroke that lasts only a few minutes and resolves itself is known as transient ischemic attack (TIA).

What are the symptoms of stroke?

Stroke symptoms typically start suddenly and include numbness or weakness in one arm, the face, one leg or an entire half of the body. They also include mental confusion or loss of consciousness, loss of vision in one or both eyes, difficulty speaking or severe headache of unknown origin. Presenting with one or several of these symptoms **IS AN EMERGENCY. ONE MUST NOT WAIT** and immediate medical care must be sought. **CALL 061 /112.**

How can CVA be prevented?

Diabetes and blood pressure must be well controlled with proper diet, proper weight control and exercise. Drug products are sometimes necessary.

Smoking: ONE MUST QUIT SMOKING! You may seek help from the family doctor or the nurse. Some **heart conditions** may favor CVA. The family doctor will advise on the best treatment.



What is the prognosis of CVA?

CVA may leave sequelae or disability, like paralysis on one side of the body. Learning, consciousness, attention, judgment and memory problems may also appear, as well as speaking problems, emotional problems and pain. Good rehabilitation will improve these sequelae. A better prognosis can be obtained if CVA is dealt with at the hospital within the first 3 hours after its onset. Indeed, immediate treatment may dissolve the obstruction in some cases.

Preventive treatment after sustaining CVA is mandatory.

*Do you remember
to take
your medication?*

