

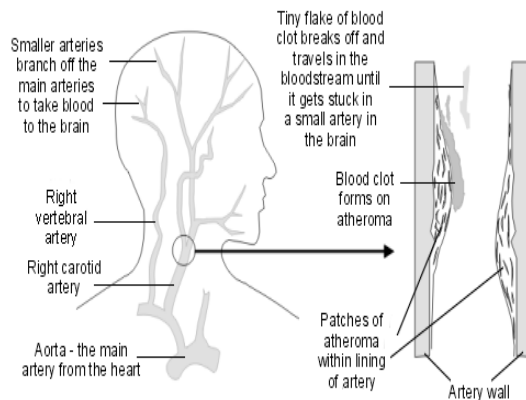
What is a transient ischaemic attack (TIA)?

A transient ischaemic attack (TIA) is a set of symptoms which come on **suddenly** last a short time, and is due to a temporary lack of blood to part of the brain. It is sometimes called a 'mini stroke'. However, unlike a stroke, the symptoms are short-lived and soon go.

(Ischaemic means a reduced supply of blood and oxygen to a part of the body.)

What is the cause of a transient ischaemic attack (TIA)?

A TIA is usually caused by a tiny blood clot that becomes stuck in a small blood vessel (artery) in the brain. This blocks the blood flow, and a part of the brain is starved of oxygen. The affected part of the brain is without oxygen for just a few minutes, and soon recovers. This is because the blood clot either breaks up quickly, or nearby blood vessels are able to provide necessary flow.



A transient ischaemic attack (TIA)

How do I know I had a TIA?

The specific symptoms of a TIA depend on which areas of the brain have their blood supply cut off, and can include:

Sudden

- Visual problems, loss of vision in one eye or one half of your field of vision.
- Numbness, weakness or paralysis of the face.
- Numbness, weakness or paralysis in an arm or leg, on either or both sides of the body.
- Difficulty speaking or understanding.
- Swallowing difficulties.

How serious is a TIA?

In itself, a TIA does little harm and the symptoms go within 24 hours. However, a TIA indicates that you have a tendency to form blood clots in your blood vessels or heart. So, if you have a TIA you have a higher than average risk of developing a larger blood clot which may cause a stroke in the future. (A stroke causes permanent rather than temporary symptoms.)

Without treatment about 1 in 10 people who have a TIA have a stroke within the following year. This is 7 times the average risk of someone of the same age who has not had a TIA. Also, within a year of having a TIA, about 3 in 100 people have a heart attack (myocardial infarction) due to atheroma (build up of fat deposit) in the blood vessels to the heart.

With treatment the above risks are reduced.

What to do now

- **Take the prescribed medication aimed at reducing risk of further events**
- **Stop smoking urgently**
- **Do not drive, operate heavy machinery or fly for 1 month after a TIA.**
- **Go to the A&E department immediately if you experience further symptoms**

An appointment will be made for you to have further tests and attend the TIA Rapid Access Clinic.

If you do not receive an appointment within 7 days, please contact the main hospital switchboard 01-4142000 and ask for the age-related health care / stroke service department.

The TIA Rapid Access Clinic is located in the Out Patient Department (Suite 3/4)