



## **TIA (Transient Ischemic Attack) – Do not ignore!**

### **What causes a TIA?**

A TIA is caused by a clot blocking the flow of blood to the brain for a short period of time. Although the symptoms go away quickly and cause no lasting damage, a TIA needs medical attention. It may be a warning sign of a full stroke. The risk is the highest in the hours and days right after a TIA.

### **What are the signs of a TIA?**

The signs of a TIA are the same as the signs of a stroke.

Face - is it drooping

Arms - is one weaker than the other

Speech - is it slurred or confused

### **What tests will be done?**

- A CT scan of the brain will be done to look for any damage to the brain. The doctor may add contrast (dye) to look at the arteries in your neck and brain for clots or other causes of the symptoms.
- A Holter (heart) monitor may be ordered to check the rhythm of your heart. It is usually worn for 2 – 4 weeks to see if you have atrial fibrillation which can cause clots to develop in your heart.
- Blood tests will help in determining risk factors that may have caused the TIA.

### **Is there a treatment for TIA?**

- The treatments vary depending on your age, medical history and lifestyle.
- Medications you may have to take:
  - aspirin to help keep the blood cells from clumping together.
  - anticoagulants (blood thinners) to prevent clots from developing.
  - blood pressure medication if your blood pressure is high. High blood pressure damages the inner layer of your artery.
  - cholesterol medication. High cholesterol builds up on the artery walls and can cause narrowing of the artery and a stroke.
  - If your blood sugars are high, you may need medicine to lower it.

### **What else can I do to lower my risk of future TIAs or stroke?**

- eat a healthy diet and stay at a healthy weight
- get regular physical activity
- avoid smoking and excessive alcohol use
- never stop your medication without talking to your doctor