

# Discharge Instructions for Transient Ischemic Attack (TIA)



You have been diagnosed with a transient ischemic attack (TIA). A TIA is also known as a mini-stroke. Blood could not reach part of your brain for a short period of time. Unlike a stroke, a TIA does not usually cause lasting damage. If you think you are having symptoms of a TIA or stroke, **get medical help right away**. Do this even if your symptoms go away.

## Prevention

- Take your medicines exactly as directed. Don't skip doses.
- Learn to take your blood pressure. Write down the numbers and tell your healthcare provider.
- Learn your cholesterol level. Follow your healthcare provider's advice about how to keep cholesterol under control.

Make these lifestyle changes:

- **Quit smoking.** Join a stop-smoking program to improve your chances of success. Ask your healthcare provider about medicines or other methods to help you quit.
- **Limit your alcohol.** Don't have more than 2 drinks a day if you're a man and no more than 1 drink a day if you're a woman.
- **Keep a healthy weight.** Get help to lose any extra pounds. If you are overweight, your healthcare provider will work with you to lose weight and lower your body mass index (BMI) to a normal or near-normal level. Making diet changes and increasing physical activity can help.
- **Start an exercise program.** Ask your healthcare provider how to get started and how much activity you should try to get on a daily or weekly basis. You can benefit from simple activities, such as walking or gardening.
- **Learn ways to manage your stress.** There are many methods to manage stress. These can help you deal with stress in your home and work life.

You may also need to change what you eat. Your healthcare provider may refer you to a registered dietitian for help with diet changes. These changes may include:

- Eating less fat and cholesterol
- Having less salt (sodium), especially if you have high blood pressure
- Eating more fresh vegetables and fruits
- Eating lean proteins, such as fish, poultry, and legumes (beans and peas)
- Eating less red meat and processed meats
- Choosing low-fat dairy products
- Using vegetable and nut oils in small amounts
- Limiting sweet and processed foods, such as chips, cookies, and baked goods

To cut back on sodium:

- Limit the amount of canned, dried, packaged, and fast foods you eat.

- Don't add salt to your food.
- Season foods with herbs instead of salt when you cook.

## Follow-up care

If you are taking certain medicines, you may need blood tests to check for progress or problems. Have blood tests as often as prescribed by your healthcare provider.

## Call 911

Call 911 right away if you have any of these:

- Weakness, tingling, or loss of feeling on 1 side of your face or body
- Sudden double vision, or trouble seeing in 1 or both eyes
- Sudden trouble talking, or slurring your speech
- Trouble understanding other people speaking
- Sudden, severe headache
- Dizziness, loss of balance, a spinning feeling, or a sense of falling
- Blackouts
- Seizures

**B.E.F.A.S.T.** is an easy way to remember the signs of stroke. When you see these signs, you know that you need to call 911 fast.

**B.E. F.A.S.T.** stands for:

- **B** is for **balance**. Sudden loss of balance or coordination.
- **E** is for **eyes**. Vision changes in one or both eyes.
- **F** is for **face drooping**. One side of the face is drooping or numb. When the person smiles, the smile is uneven.
- **A** is for **arm weakness**. One arm is weak or numb. When the person lifts both arms at the same time, one arm may drift downward.
- **S** is for **speech difficulty**. You may notice slurred speech or trouble speaking. The person can't repeat a simple sentence correctly when asked.
- **T** is for **time to call 911**. If someone shows any of these symptoms, even if they go away, call 911 right away. Make note of the time the symptoms first appeared.

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