

Patient Information

## Stroke Services

# Transient Ischaemic Attack (TIA): Accessing Specialist Services in Coventry and Rugby

## What is a TIA?

A TIA is sometimes called a mini stroke or mild stroke. It is considered a warning or strong predictor of a full blown stroke, so should not be ignored.

A TIA occurs when there is an interruption in the blood supply to your brain. It causes symptoms similar to having a stroke in that you may experience slurred speech, weakness in your arm or leg, balance or visual problems.

However, as it is related to an interruption in blood supply, when the blood supply returns the symptoms go away. Your symptoms can last from anything from a couple of minutes to several hours.

## What will happen next?

- **If you have been seen by your GP today**

The Doctor who has seen you today will want you to be seen by a specialist stroke clinician.

If considered necessary, you will be asked to attend University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire, **urgently**, to see one of the Stroke Team Specialists.

Your GP will give you a letter to bring with you. **It is very important that you attend this appointment.**

If you don't need to attend hospital today, you will be asked to attend **urgently** in the next week. The appointment may be as early as within the next 24 hours. If no one has contacted you within the next 24 hours with an appointment, please contact the Booking Office on 024 7696 8549.

You will have been asked for a contact number and it is important you are available on this number within the next 24 hours.

In preparation for the consultation with the Stroke Specialist you will have blood tests, an ECG performed (a heart trace monitor), and may be started on blood thinning and cholesterol reducing medication. You may also be given some medication for your blood pressure.



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Or

- **If you have been seen in the Emergency Department today**

The Doctor who has seen you today wants you to be seen **urgently** by a specialist stroke clinician.

You will be given an appointment to see the Stroke Specialist within 24 hours or seven days according to need. If you are not from the Coventry or Rugby area; you may be offered an appointment at your local hospital.

**It is very important that you attend this appointment.**

It will take place either in the Outpatients Department at University Hospital or the Carotid Doppler Department via X-ray. Please check which clinic when you are given your appointment.

## Driving

**It is important that you do not drive until after your consultation with the Stroke Specialist.**

## What will happen at this appointment?

The Stroke Specialist will examine you and discuss with you your diagnosis. If required, a Carotid Doppler scan will be carried out on the same day and you will return to the Stroke Specialist to discuss the findings immediately following the test.

A Carotid Doppler looks at the blood supply in your neck. It is not invasive or painful. It involves a gel being placed on your neck and a probe being rubbed over the arteries in your neck to look at the flow of blood in your carotid arteries.

Any further tests or consultations will be discussed with you by the Stroke Specialist as required

**Please allow up to 2 hours for this appointment**

**In the meantime please be aware of the signs and symptoms of a potential stroke and call for an ambulance if any of the following suddenly occur:**

## Common symptoms and signs

- Weakness (paralysis) of one side of the body
- Difficulty in speaking
- Altered sensation on one side of the body
- Loss of vision in one eye

**These symptoms occur suddenly. Call an Ambulance.**

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### **FAST is a simple Face, Arm and Speech Test to do to diagnose stroke. Test for these signs:**

**Facial weakness:** Can the person smile? Is there drooping of the eye or mouth?

**Arm weakness:** Can the person raise both arms?

**Speech problems:** Can the person speak clearly and understand what you say?

## **Contacts**

If you need further information about your appointment, contact the Booking Office.  
If you need further information about TIAs or Strokes, contact Sarah Mountford, Stroke Services Co-ordinator Tel 024 7696 8336

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 024 7696 8336 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy

### **Document History**

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