

**Prisma Health—Midlands
Comprehensive Stroke Center**

5 Richland Medical Park Dr.
Columbia, SC 29203
803-434-2471
PalmettoHealth.org

**Prisma Health—Upstate
Cerebrovascular & Stroke Center**

701 Grove Rd.
Greenville, SC 29605
864-455-8848

Transient ischemic attack (TIA): Patient guide

PrismaHealth.org



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Prisma Health provides appropriate aids and services, including qualified interpreters and written information in various formats, for people with disabilities. It provides language assistance services, including translated documents and oral interpretation, to people whose primary language is not English. All services are timely and offered for free. Those needing these services in the Upstate should call 864-455-7000.

Prisma Health has designated its Diversity Director to ensure compliance with these services. Any person who believes someone has been discriminated against may submit to the Diversity Director, within 60 days of becoming aware of the alleged discrimination, a written complaint with the name and address of the person filing the grievance, as well as the problem or action alleged to be discriminatory.

Complaints may be filed at Diversity@PrismaHealth.org or 701 Grove Road, Greenville, SC 29605, attn. Diversity Director. Individuals may file a complaint in court or with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Civil Rights, by mail at 200 Independence Ave. SW, Room 509F, HHH Building, Washington, DC 20201, by phone at 1-800-368-1019 or online at <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>.

Language assistance information

Si usted habla español, tenemos a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 864-455-7000. (Spanish)

如果您说中文，傳譯服務可免費提供服务。您可以拨打。864-455-7000 (Chinese)

Nếu bạn nói Tiếng Việt, có các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí dành cho bạn. Gọi số 864-455-7000. (Vietnamese)

한국어를 사용하시는 경우, 언어 지원 서비스를 무료로 이용하실 수 있습니다. 864-455-7000 번으로 전화해 주십시오. (Korean)

Si vous ne maîtrisez pas bien la langue anglaise, des services gratuits d'assistance linguistique sont disponibles au numero suivant 864-455-7000. (French)

Kung nagsasalita ka ng Tagalog, maaari kang gumamit ng mga serbisyo ng tulong sa wika nang walang bayad. Tumawag sa 864-455-7000. (Tagalog)

Если Вы говорите на русском языке, то Вам доступны бесплатные услуги переводчика. Звоните 864-455-7000. (Russian)

Wenn Sie Deutsch sprechen, stehen Ihnen kostenlos sprachliche Hilfsdienstleistungen zur Verfügung. Rufnummer: 864-455-7000. (German)

જો તમે ગુજરાતી જાણતા હોય તો, ભાષા સહાયક સેવાઓ, વિના મુલ્યે, તમારા માટે ઉપલબ્ધ છે. ફોન કરો (૮૬૪) ૪૫૫-૭૦૦૦. (Gujarati)

إذا كنت من الناطقين باللغة العربية، تتاح خدمات المساعدة اللغوية لك. اتصل على الرقم 864-455-7000. (Arabic)

Se fala português, encontram-se disponíveis serviços linguísticos, grátis. Ligue para 864-455-7000. (Portuguese)

注意事項：日本語を話す場合、言語支援サービスは無料でご利用できます。864-455-7000 までお電話ください。 (Japanese)

Якщо ви розмовляєте українською мовою, ви можете звернутися до безкоштовної служби мовної підтримки. Телефонуйте за номером 864-455-7000. (Ukrainian)

अगर आप हिंदी बोलते हैं, तो आप के लिए निः शुल्क भाषा सहायता सेवाएँ उपलब्ध हैं। 864-455-7000 पर कॉल करें। (Hindi)

បើលោកអ្នកនិយាយភាសាខ្មែរ លោកអ្នកអាចប្រើប្រាស់សេវាជំនួយភាសាបានដោយឥតគិតថ្លៃ។ ហៅទូរសព្ទទៅលេខ 864-455-7000។ (Cambodian)

Stroke support and resources

A TIA can be overwhelming for you and your family. We hope the information in this guide will help explain some of the things you may be experiencing and help with your recovery. Below is a list of additional help and resources.

Prisma Health resources

Midlands

- Prisma Health–Midlands CareCall, 803-296-CARE (2273), helps you find a doctor.
- Prisma Health’s FREE Smoking Cessation Program, 803-296-2273. One-month supply of medication and six educational sessions.
- Prisma Health Stroke Center, 803-434-2471.
- PalmettoHealth.org (search “Stroke Center” in the search bar).

Upstate

- Prisma Health–Upstate Providers, 1-844-447-3627 (toll free) or ghs.org/providers, helps you find a doctor.
- Cerebrovascular & Stroke Center, 864-455-8848 or ghs.org/stroke.

Other resources

- American Stroke Association
1-888-4-STROKE (478-7653)
stroke.org
- American Heart Association
1-800-242-8721
heart.org
- S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC)
1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8869)
Smoking cessation program (talk with a trained tobacco treatment specialist)
- National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke
1-800-352-9424 or 301-496-5751
ninda.nih.gov
- Stroke/TIA Clinic
South Carolina Neurological Clinic, PA
1333 Taylor St., Ste. 1-C • Columbia, SC 29201
803-254-6391
- Palmetto Health-USC Neurology
8 Richland Medical Park Dr., Ste. 420 • Columbia, SC 29203
803-545-6050

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What is a TIA?

Transient ischemic attack (TIA) occurs when a blood clot blocks a blood vessel in the brain for a short time. A TIA is a strong sign that a stroke will happen in the future.

What is the difference between TIA and stroke?

A TIA often is called a “mini-stroke” because a TIA is just like a stroke, except that a stroke causes long-lasting symptoms, while a TIA goes away. A TIA does not cause permanent damage to the brain like a stroke does, but the symptoms are the same.

Risk of stroke after TIA

This risk is highest in the first few days to weeks after having the TIA. That is why it is so important to get medical attention if you think you or your loved one has had a TIA. A TIA can serve as a warning of a possible stroke happening in the future. It’s a warning to take seriously. About one third of people who have a TIA go on to have a more severe stroke within one year. It’s also an opportunity to take the necessary steps to prevent a stroke or another TIA from happening.



Prevention

After you have had a TIA, you are at risk for having another TIA or a stroke. Knowing your risk factors and living a healthy lifestyle are the best things you can do to avoid having another one.

You can reduce the risk of another TIA by:

- Seeing your doctor regularly and keeping your follow-up appointment(s).
- Taking your medications exactly as your doctor has prescribed for you.
- Managing your high blood pressure, high cholesterol and/or high blood sugar levels by eating a healthy diet, exercising and working with your doctor.
- Exercising regularly for at least 30 minutes a day on most days of the week.
- Losing weight, if you are overweight, or staying at a healthy weight.
- Eating a healthy diet/following a Mediterranean diet. A good resource is oldwayspt.org/traditional-diets/Mediterranean-diet/Mediterranean-diet-101
 1. Eat lots of vegetables.
 2. Change the way you think about meat.
 3. Enjoy some dairy products.
 4. Eat fish twice a week.
 5. Cook a vegetarian meal one night a week.
 6. Use good fats: extra-virgin olive oil, nuts, peanuts, olives and avocados.
 7. Switch to whole grains.
 8. Eat fresh fruit.
- Limiting alcohol to no more than two drinks a day for men and one drink a day for women.
- Quitting smoking.
- Eliminating the use of illegal drugs (cocaine, marijuana, heroin, etc.).

Smoking

If you smoke, QUIT. Smoking makes your blood vessels narrow. This makes it harder for blood to get to your brain. Being around secondhand smoke also can hurt your health.

Some helpful tips to quit smoking include:

- Make an agreement with yourself to quit.
- Ask your doctor or nurse about aids such as Chantix®, Zyban® or Nicoderm®.
- Go to a stop smoking class.
- Avoid people who smoke.

For more information or to register for Prisma Health–Midland’s Smoking Cessation class, call CareCall at 803-296-CARE (2273).

Obesity and exercise

Overweight people are more likely to have high blood pressure, heart disease, high cholesterol, diabetes and stroke. Reaching your ideal body weight and exercising will reduce your risk for stroke. The American Heart Association/ American Stroke Association suggests exercising for 30 minutes a day, five-to-seven days each week. This amount can be broken up into three 10-minute brisk walks during the day. Before beginning any exercise program, ask your doctor to discuss what is right for you and your health.

Excessive alcohol

Excessive use of alcohol can raise blood pressure, weakening blood vessels in the brain. Limit alcohol to no more than two drinks a day for men and one drink a day for women.

Illegal drugs

Intravenous (IV) drug use increases the risk of blood clots. Cocaine and other drugs can raise blood pressure and weaken blood vessels.

Warning signs and symptoms of TIA

The warning signs and symptoms are the same as the symptoms of a stroke.

If you see any of these signs, BE FAST:

- B** – Balance off/dizziness: experiencing sudden loss of balance or coordination.
- E** – Eyes: experiencing sudden blurred vision, double vision or sudden, persistent vision trouble.
- F** – Face drooping: face drooping on one side, numbness or drooling.
- A** – Arm weakness: cannot hold one arm up, control your hand.
- S** – Speech difficulty: talking like you are drunk (slurred speech) or others cannot understand what you are trying to say.
- T** – Time to call 911: Time is brain. The sooner you get to the hospital, the better your chances are for improving or getting better. If you wait too long, you may get worse or may not get better.

A sudden, terrible headache – **“the worst ever”** – may be a sign of a bleed in the brain and is very dangerous. If any of these signs happen, call 911 as soon as possible.

TIA diagnosis

Doctors will run different types of tests to discover the cause of the TIA. Some of the tests include:

- CT (computerized tomography) uses radiation to create a picture of the brain.
- MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) uses a large magnetic field to produce a picture that is sharper and gives more detail than a CT scan.
- EKG (electrocardiogram) measures and records the electrical activity of the heart.
- ECHO (echocardiogram) reveals if an opening in the heart allowed a blood clot to pass through to the brain. It is a type of ultrasound test on the front of the chest that gives the doctor a picture of your heart.
- TEE (transesophageal echocardiogram) is an ultrasound test inserted in the esophagus (throat). The esophagus sits behind the heart, so the doctor gets a better view of the back of the heart and the lower left chamber of the heart.
- Carotid ultrasound uses sound waves to create a picture of the inside of the arteries in your neck to see if any blockage is located there.
- Labs will be drawn on arrival and throughout your hospital stay.
- Heart monitor will monitor your heart rate and rhythm. You might go home with one, as well.

Who is at risk?

Risk factors are different for each person.

Risk factors you CANNOT change

- **Age** – Stroke affects all ages; the older you are, the greater your risk of stroke.
- **Race and ethnicity** – African Americans have an increased risk because they have a higher rate of high blood pressure. Hispanic Americans also are at a greater risk because of problems caused by diabetes.
- **Gender** – While more men have strokes each year, more than half of stroke deaths occur in women.
- **Family history** – The risk of a stroke is greater in people whose close blood relatives have had a stroke (including those from ruptured aneurysms).
- **Prior stroke or TIA** – Someone who has had a stroke or TIA in the past is at higher risk of having another stroke.



Risk factors you CAN control (personal risk factors)

High blood pressure

Uncontrolled high blood pressure can damage and weaken the brain's blood vessels, causing them to become narrow, break or leak.

Normal blood pressure is less than 120/80. Elevated blood pressure is 120-129/less than 80. Different stages of high blood pressure need different treatments. To help control your blood pressure, check your blood pressure often, take your medications, eat healthy, be active, maintain a healthy weight and follow up with your primary care provider.

High blood cholesterol

Cholesterol can build up in your blood vessels, causing heart disease and stroke by blocking or slowing blood flow.

In addition to your medications, diet and exercise can help control your cholesterol levels.

- Your total cholesterol should be below 200 mg/dL.
- Your triglyceride level should be below 150 mg/dL.
- Your HDL, or good cholesterol, should be above 40 mg/dL.
- Your LDL, or bad cholesterol, should be below 100 mg/dL.

High blood sugar (diabetes)

People with diabetes end up with too much glucose in their blood, while their cells don't receive enough energy. Over time, this glucose can lead to increased fatty deposits or clots on the inside of the blood vessel walls. These clots can narrow or block the blood vessels in the brain or neck, cutting off the blood supply, stopping oxygen from getting to the brain and causing a stroke.

Watch your diet, take medications as prescribed and exercise regularly.

Atrial fibrillation

Atrial fibrillation (Afib) is an irregular heartbeat that can cause clots to form. It causes the upper chambers of the heart to shake instead of correctly beating to move blood into the lower chambers of the heart. Blood flow slows down and pools, which increases the risk of blood clotting. If a clot breaks loose and enters the bloodstream, it can cause a heart attack or stroke.

Treatment for Afib includes medications or a procedure to help return your heartbeat to normal.