

When should aspirin be started after a TIA?

The National Clinical Guidelines for Stroke 2002 update (1) noted that the management of transient ischaemic attacks (TIA) should be the same as that for an ischaemic stroke. Indeed, the guidelines noted that the term stroke is understood to encompass TIA.

The revised guidelines published in 2004 (2) included a separate section for TIA. This section included the following guidance

- Patients with TIA should be assessed and investigated in a specialist service (e.g. neurovascular clinic) as soon as possible within seven days of the incident.
- Once all symptoms have stopped, aspirin should be prescribed. 300mg aspirin be given after a stroke or TIA as soon as haemorrhagic stroke has been discounted and that they should continue on antiplatelet therapy at a dose of 50-300mg daily.
- Patients with more than one TIA in a week should be investigated in hospital immediately.
- Those at risk of the conditions which cause stroke should be treated or referred for specialist management, including surgery if appropriate. Evidence suggests that surgery is only beneficial up to 12 weeks after the attack.

References:

1. National Clinical Guidelines for Stroke Update 2002. Intercollegiate Working Party for Stroke. Clinical Effectiveness & Evaluation Unit, Royal College of Physicians. June 2002
2. National Clinical Guidelines for Stroke second edition. Intercollegiate Working Party for Stroke. Clinical Effectiveness & Evaluation Unit, Royal College of Physicians. June 2004

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