

tPA (tissue Plasminogen Activator) for Stroke

You may have had a stroke within the last 4½ hours. A stroke can be caused by a blockage of blood flow to the brain. This type of stroke is called an ischemic stroke. One of the treatments that is being considered for you is a medication called tPA or tissue plasminogen activator. This medication helps to dissolve the blockage of blood flow to the brain. It is given through an intravenous or IV, a thin tube that is inserted into a vein in the arm.

You will need to have a CT scan of your head to find out if you have any bleeding into the brain. We need to know that the stroke was not caused by a bleeding problem before we can treat you with tPA.

- If the CT scan shows bleeding, tPA cannot be used. Other treatments will be discussed with you.
- If the CT scan does not show bleeding within the brain, then the doctor can consider tPA as long as you meet other specific criteria which the doctor will go over with you.

tPA is considered the standard treatment for ischemic stroke in patients who meet certain criteria. However, you may choose not to have tPA treatment. Your care will not otherwise be affected.

Talk to any member of your health care team if you have any questions about tPA or other treatments for stroke.

The benefits and risks of tPA are listed on the next page.

Benefits	Risks
<p>1 in 6 people return to normal function if they receive tPA within 2 hours of a stroke.</p> <p>1 in 14 people return to normal function if they receive tPA within 4½ hours of a stroke.</p> <p>If tPA is given within 4½ hours of a stroke, patients who receive tPA are more likely to return to normal or near normal function within 3 months after their stroke.</p> <p>However, even if people do not recover completely, they still improve more when treated with tPA than if they did not receive tPA.</p>	<p>1 in 17 people have bleeding in the brain or in other parts of the body such as the intestines, eyes or kidneys that is not life threatening.</p> <p>1 in 33 people have bleeding in the brain which may lead to the person's death.</p> <p>However, patients who receive tPA are NO more likely to die than patients who do not receive tPA.</p>