

Posterior Inferior Cerebellar Artery Stroke

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Fact Sheet

I have had a stroke, but why do I have such unusual symptoms?

Most strokes cause weakness on one side of the body. Some strokes affect the *brainstem* and *cerebellum*. The Posterior Inferior Cerebellar Artery (PICA) carries blood to this part of the brain. This stroke (*Wallenberg's Syndrome*) causes the person to have balance problems and lean to one side. They may also have numbness on one side of the face and body and an eye droop. They may have hoarseness and trouble swallowing. Dizziness is another major symptom of this type of stroke.

What can I do to get better?

Treatment depends on what problems you are having. If you are off balance, physical therapy can help you walk safely. Sometimes a walker or cane will be needed. Therapy will also help you sit and stand without being pulled to one side. You can tell the therapist what activities you want to practice so you can reach your goals.

If you are dizzy, the physical therapist will teach you to gradually move your head and body so the symptoms will decrease. This type of treatment is called habituation. Focusing your eyes in one place while your head is moving will also help you to manage the dizziness. The more you understand, the more motivated you will be to do your home exercise program.

If swallowing or hoarseness is a problem, you may see a doctor that treats the throat and vocal cords. Speech therapy can help you eat and drink safely and to speak more clearly. If your vision is affected, an eye doctor that specializes neurologic disorders, may help you to see more clearly

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