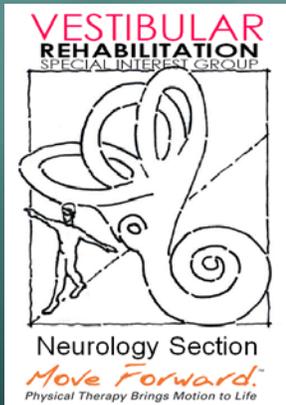


FACT SHEET



Anterior Inferior Cerebellar Artery Stroke

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

It is true that most strokes cause weakness on one side of the body. However, if the stroke affects the area of the brain called the *cerebellum*, the symptoms are quite different. The Anterior Inferior Cerebellar Artery (AICA) carries blood to the cerebellum. This area of the brain contributes to balance, coordination, sensation of the face and body, movement of the face, sense of body position and midline, hearing and eye movement coordination.

An AICA stroke can cause: dizziness or vertigo, nausea, imbalance with a feeling of being pulled to one side, facial weakness and numbness on one side and decreased sensation of the body on the other side, hearing loss and/or ringing in the ears, and difficulty walking. Vision may be blurry, and coordination can be impaired as well.

What can I do to get better?

Treatment will depend upon the nature and severity of your symptoms. If you are having trouble hearing, you may see a doctor that specializes in hearing and an audiologist. If swallowing is a problem, you may see a doctor that specializes in the throat, and speech therapy may work with you to make eating and drinking safe. If your vision is affected, a *neuro-ophthalmologist*, or an eye doctor that specializes in neurologic disorders, may help you to see better with your affected eye.

If your balance is affected, physical therapy will focus on helping you to walk safely. Sometimes a walker or cane will be needed. Therapy will also focus on improving a sense of where your body is in space and decreasing the sense of being pulled over to one side.

If you are dizzy, the physical therapist will help you to understand the symptoms and work on decreasing them. Gradually increasing your movement tolerance will help you to move around better. Focusing your eyes in one place while your head is moving will help you to manage the dizziness. Your therapist will also help you to understand how the *vestibular*, or inner ear system, works. This knowledge will help you predict what activities may increase your symptoms or be especially challenging. Finally, your personal goals are also important and should be taken into account.



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