



About the MVH Stroke Center

IN a single year, more than 30 patients were seen at Martha's Vineyard Hospital with symptoms of a possible stroke. In these cases the first three hours can make a critical difference – in the quality of recovery, and even between life and death. The Martha's Vineyard Hospital's stroke protocol program is certified by the Massachusetts Dept. of Public Health and the American Stroke Association, making the Hospital a primary stroke service center. Our ER staff works closely with neurologists and radiologists at Mass General Hospital. Brain images from the Island CT scanner can be instantly sent to Boston and MGH physicians can interview patients via webcam in real time, a critical aid in establishing the nature of the stroke and in guiding such decisions as the use of clot-busting drugs.

We Want You to Learn the Warning Signs Of Stroke

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden, severe headache with no known cause
- Be prepared for an emergency.

Act F.A.S.T.

FACE

Ask the person to smile.
Does one side of the face droop?

ARMS

Ask the person to raise both arms.
Does one arm drift downward?

SPEECH

Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence.
Are the words slurred? Can he/she repeat the sentence correctly?

TIME

If the person shows any of these symptoms, time is important.
Call 911 or get to the hospital fast.

- Keep a list of emergency rescue service numbers next to the telephone and in your pocket, wallet or purse.
- Not all the warning signs occur in every stroke. Don't ignore signs of stroke, even if they go away! Check the time. When did the first warning sign or symptom start? You'll be asked this important question later.
- If you have one or more stroke symptoms that

last more than a few minutes, don't delay!

- Immediately call 9-1-1 or the emergency medical service (EMS) number so an ambulance (ideally with advanced life support) can quickly be sent for you.
- If you're with someone who may be having stroke symptoms, immediately call 9-1-1 or the EMS. Expect the person to protest — denial is common. Don't take "no" for an answer. Insist on taking prompt action.

The MV Hospital Stroke Team is available to speak to community groups and providers.
For information call the Patient Safety Coordinator at 1-508-957-9489