

Information for relatives and carers

Mechanical thrombectomy

We have given you this factsheet because your relative has had a stroke. This means that one of the arteries that bring blood to the brain is blocked by a clot. Without a blood supply, this part of the brain cannot survive.

We need to perform an urgent procedure known as a 'mechanical thrombectomy' to remove the clot.

What is a mechanical thrombectomy?

A mechanical thrombectomy is a procedure in which we use stents (splints) or small suction devices to try to re-open the blocked blood vessel. The procedure usually lasts between one and two hours.

The sooner we carry out this procedure, the better the patient's chances of recovery.

Benefits

A mechanical thrombectomy procedure can have greater benefits than a standard treatment procedure for a stroke:

- If your relative has a mechanical thrombectomy procedure, they are 10 to 20% more likely to make an excellent or good recovery (so that they are still able to look after themselves).
- Up to 40% of people who have a mechanical thrombectomy also have less disability overall, compared with those who have other treatments for a stroke.

Risks

The main risk of having a mechanical thrombectomy is a medium risk (5%) of bleeding into the brain causing death or more disability.

It's important to remember that the overall risk to life would be the same if the patient did not have the procedure.

There are other serious risks associated with the procedure, but these are much less common (<1%). They include injury to the groin artery, major bleeding or kidney failure.

During the procedure

We often sedate patients during the mechanical thrombectomy procedure and sometimes need to use a general anaesthetic.

We sometimes have to do additional unplanned procedures or treatments that we have not discussed with you. We would only do this to save life or to prevent serious harm to health.

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After the procedure

After the procedure, patients usually go to a recovery area for a period of time. We will then move them on to one of the wards.

We appreciate that you will be anxious to know whether or not your relative's treatment has been successful. Please be aware that you may have to wait three to four hours before you are able to see your relative and find out how the treatment has gone.

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