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An initiative of the ABIM Foundation



American Association of Neurological Surgeons



CNS

Preventing seizures after an ischemic stroke

When you need medicine—and when you don't

An ischemic (iss-keem-ik) stroke is the most common type of stroke. A blood vessel gets blocked so that it can't send blood to a part of the brain. This injures the brain and can cause a seizure.

A seizure causes:

- Involuntary body movements.
- Strange sensations.
- Blackouts.

Some doctors routinely prescribe anti-seizure medicine after an ischemic stroke. But this treatment is not usually necessary. And the medicine may do more harm than good.

Here's why:

Anti-seizure medicine won't help.

There's no evidence that taking anti-seizure medicine after an ischemic stroke will prevent a seizure or help you recover.



If you don't have a seizure right after the stroke, you probably won't have one. The medicine isn't necessary.

The medicine has side effects.

Anti-seizure medicines can have unpleasant side effects, including:

- Allergic reactions
- Fever
- Fatigue
- Upset stomach
- Dizziness
- Blurred vision
- Dulled senses (feeling foggy)
- Problems with concentration, attention, and focus

The medicine can be expensive.

The costs of these medicines vary a lot, depending on your insurance. You can pay from \$15 to hundreds of dollars for a 30-day supply.

When do you need anti-seizure medicine after a stroke?

The medicine may be helpful if you have already had a seizure after an ischemic stroke. The medicine may help prevent a second seizure.

This report is for you to use when talking with your healthcare provider. It is not a substitute for medical advice and treatment. Use of this report is at your own risk.

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