Title: Carotid Stenosis: Information for Patients

Author: Nick Briese, MS3

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Abstract: Carotid stenosis increases your risk of stroke and transient ischemic attack (TIA). Aspirin, along with control of blood pressure and cholesterol and smoking cessation, can help lower the risk of stroke. This pamphlet briefly describes carotid stenosis, risk factors for carotid stenosis, and steps that patients can take to reduce their risk for carotid stenosis and the problems that come with it.
Prevention
Lower your risk!

There are many things you can do to lower your risk of carotid stenosis. Getting regular exercise most days of the week is one important step. Eating healthy foods is another with a diet low in fats and high in fruits and vegetables.

If you are a smoker, quitting smoking can improve your health in many ways, including lowering your risk for carotid stenosis.

If you have high blood pressure or high cholesterol, your doctor can work with you to lower these with medications. Exercise and the foods you eat also help blood pressure and cholesterol problems.

If you have diabetes, it is especially important that you keep good control of blood pressure.

For more information

Carotid Stenosis

TIA (Transient Ischemic Attack)

Stroke
http://www.hearthub.org/hc-stroke.htm

Created by Nick Briese, MS3
Family Medicine Clerkship
University of Minnesota
Carotid Stenosis: What is it?

Carotid stenosis is a narrowing of the carotid arteries. It is also called carotid artery disease. The carotid arteries are the main blood vessels in your neck that bring blood to your brain. Narrowing is caused by a cholesterol plague, just like in heart disease.

Heart disease increases your risk of a heart attack. Carotid stenosis increases your risk of a stroke and transient ischemic attack, or TIA.

TIA? Just like a stroke, you may have weakness, numbness, vision problems, confusion, or difficulty speaking. Unlike a stroke, these problems go away in a few hours when your brain starts to get enough blood flow again. People who have a TIA have an increased risk of stroke.

Risk Factors: Who gets it?

Most of the same things that affect the health of your heart increase your risk for carotid stenosis. There are some you can change, including:

- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Smoking

Diabetes also increases the risk of carotid stenosis.

Increasing age is another risk factor.

- About 1 in 200 adults in their 50s has carotid stenosis
- About 1 in 10 adults in their 80s has carotid stenosis

Treatment: Preventing Stroke

Most people with carotid stenosis take aspirin to lower their risk of stroke. Medications for high blood pressure and high cholesterol are also used. Your doctor will help choose the right medications for you.

Another treatment is an operation called carotid endarterectomy, or CEA, where a surgeon removes plagues from the inside of the carotid artery.

Angioplasty, where a balloon is used to make a bigger passage for blood in the carotid artery, is another option. Often a special tube called a stent is put in at the same time to help hold the artery open.

Whether a CEA or angioplasty is right for you depends on how narrow your artery is as well as your symptoms. You can discuss the pros and cons with your doctor.