

# Mechanical Thrombectomy

This leaflet explains more about Mechanical Thrombectomy, including the benefits, risks and any alternatives and what you can expect when you come to hospital.

If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.

## Why should I have Mechanical Thrombectomy?

A Stroke is an EMERGENCY. You have had a stroke due to a blood clot blocking an artery and cutting off blood flow to the brain. The doctor can see this blocked artery on the CT scan you had with the injection of dye.

## What is Mechanical Thrombectomy?

St Georges Hospital offers an emergency treatment for this type of stroke, which has to be done quickly. This is called a Thrombectomy.

## What happens during Mechanical Thrombectomy?

When you arrive in the department you will be assessed to see if this treatment is still appropriate - it isn't always. The treatment takes place in the x-ray department. You will have an x-ray with dye to check the blood vessels (an angiogram). You may be given some sedation or even an anaesthetic. A radiology doctor will insert a small wire and tube ("catheter") into an artery in your groin and guide the wire into the blocked artery.

If the artery is still blocked, the doctor will try to remove the clot, either by suction or by pulling it out with a special device called a stent retriever. This treatment opens the artery in about 70% of cases.

## What are the risks?

- There can be some bruising or swelling at the groin where the catheter is inserted
- The angiogram can cause stroke (1% of patients)
- Bleeding in the brain can occur. This can be serious (<4% of patients) and may even lead to death
- There is a very small risk of tearing the artery (<1%)
- There is a very small risk of infection.

## Are there any alternatives?

The alternative is having no treatment or for some people Intravenous medication (an injection) alone.

- Without Mechanical Thrombectomy on average there is 26% chance of regaining independence.
- With this Mechanical Thrombectomy on average there is 45% chance of regaining independence.

## How can I prepare for Mechanical Thrombectomy?

You do not need to do anything to prepare, the Doctor and Nurse looking after you will make sure everything is ready.

## Asking for your consent

It is important that you feel involved in decisions about your care. You or your next of kin may be asked to sign a consent form for this treatment or it may be carried out in your best interest if you are unable to do so. You can withdraw your consent at any time, even if you have said 'yes' previously. If you would like more details about our consent process, please ask for a copy of our policy.

## Will I feel any pain?

You may experience a small amount of discomfort in your groin or head, but most patients do not remember this.

## What happens after Mechanical Thrombectomy?

The procedure takes on average 20-30 minutes. After the procedure you will most likely go to the Hyper Acute Stroke Unit on William Drummond Ward. There you will be monitored closely by specialist stroke nurses. Some people go to our intensive care unit. If you are not local to St Georges you will be transferred to your local Stroke Unit as soon as it has a bed available - this may be the very next day.

## Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about Mechanical Thrombectomy, please ask any member of the team who will be very happy to help.

William Drummond Ward, 3rd floor, Atkinson Morley Wing, St George's Hospital  
020 8725 1326  
020 8725 1327

## Additional services

### Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough Wing (near the lift foyer).

**Tel:** 020 8725 2453 **Email:** pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk

### NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.

**Web:** [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

### NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

**Tel:** 111

