

# Anterior Inferior Cerebellar Artery Stroke

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## Patient Fact Sheet

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## *I have had a stroke, but why do I have such unusual symptoms?*

Most people think of weakness on one side of the body when they hear the word “stroke”. But not all strokes are the same. If a stroke happens in a part of the brain called the **cerebellum**, the symptoms can be different.

The **Anterior Inferior Cerebellar Artery (AICA)** brings blood to the cerebellum. This area of the brain helps with balance, coordination, feeling in the face and body, moving the face, knowing where your body is in space, hearing and moving your eyes how you want them to move.

Symptoms of an AICA stroke include: dizziness or spinning feeling (vertigo), nausea (feeling sick to your stomach), trouble with balance or being pulled to one side, weakness or numbness on one side of the face, less feeling on the opposite side of the body, hearing loss or ringing in the ears, and trouble walking. An AICA stroke might also cause blurry or double vision and poor coordination.

## *What can I do to get better?*

The type of therapy you need depends on your symptoms and how serious they are. Your personal goals are also important and should be a part of your care plan.

- **Hearing problems:** You may see a hearing doctor and an audiologist.
- **Swallowing problems:** You may see a throat doctor speech therapist can help make eating and drinking safer.
- **Vision problems:** A special eye doctor called a neuro-ophthalmologist can help you see better with your affected eye. Vision therapy with an occupational therapist might also be helpful.

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**Balance and Walking:** If your balance is affected,

- Physical therapy can focus on helping you walk safely.
- You may need a cane or walker to prevent falls.
- Physical therapy will also help you feel more steady and less like you are being pulled to one side.

**Dizziness:** If you feel dizzy,

- A physical therapist will teach you about your symptoms and how to manage them.
- Moving more over time can help you feel better and do more of your daily activities.
- Learning to keep your eyes focused while your head moves can reduce dizziness.
- Your physical therapist will explain how your inner ear (vestibular system) affects your balance and dizziness.
- This will help you know what activities might make symptoms worse.

Dizziness and balance problems from this kind of stroke can be very hard to deal with. With time and hard work in physical therapy, you can get better. These symptoms are harder to treat than regular inner ear problems, but many people improve with time and effort.