



The Clinical Evaluation and Treatment of ED Ischemic Stroke Patients

Learning Objectives

- Review the optimal clinical evaluation, diagnostic testing, and treatment of Emergency Department patients with a neurological deficit and suspected ischemic stroke.
- Discuss procedures and protocols that will assist the emergency physician in providing care to these critically ill and injured patients.

Background

One of the critical requirements of the emergency physician is to be able to efficiently diagnose and effectively treat patients who present to the Emergency Department with a neurological deficit and suspected ischemic stroke. This lecture will highlight two specific skills that are part of this overall treatment strategy, the ability to estimate the NIH stroke scale (NIHSS) and the emergent treatment of accelerated hypertension in the setting of an acute stroke.

In this Brain Injury Course, FERNE would like to stress the use of specific procedures and protocols in managing patients with neurological illness and injury. In effect, the goal is to take a surgeon's approach to treating medical problems in the Emergency Department, including complications related to acute stroke.

Key Clinical Questions

- What are the clinical signs and symptoms of acute ischemic stroke?
- How should patients with accelerated hypertension in the setting of ischemic stroke be managed?
- What therapies should be utilized in order to treat hypertension, and in what clinical setting should they be utilized?
- What should be the clinical endpoint for effectively treating hypertension in acute stroke patients?

Featured Procedures or Protocols

- Estimation of the NIH stroke scale (NIHSS) based on the initial ED neurological exam.
- Treatment protocol for the management of accelerated hypertension in acute stroke patients.

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