

Transient Ischemic Attack: sudden, brief episode of neurologic impairment caused by **temporary** interruption in cerebral blood flow

→ essentially a stroke that only lasts a couple mins

→ warning that a CVA can occur in near future; 1/3 ppl develop stroke → should **NOT** be ignored

• **patho:** formation of **thrombi** as fatty deposits break off

→ **hypertension** causes break off of these thrombi

→ smoking narrows vasculature = ↑ BP

→ estrogen/hormone replacement can cause thrombi

• **causes:** interruption of **blood flow** → cholesterol build-up of arteries (atherosclerosis, arteriosclerosis); cardiac disease: diabetes

• **assessment:**

◦ temp lightheadedness; confusion; speech disturbance

◦ loss of vision: diplopia; variable consciousness

◦ numbness, weakness, impaired coordination, paralysis (one side)

→ symptoms may appear then disappear quickly w/ no residual effects (baseline); sx short lived

◦ **F**ace drooping

◦ **A**rm weakness

◦ **S**lurred speech

◦ **T**ime to call 911

• **diagnostic:** rules out other conditions or determine severity of occlusion

◦ auscultation of carotid artery may reveal **bruit** (caused by blood flowing over the rough surface of arteries)

◦ ultrasound, carotid arteriogram, CT, MRI

• **med management:**

◦ control BP, lose weight, stop alc & tobacco use

◦ cholesterol-lowering drugs

◦ prophylactic anticoagulant / antiplatelet (aspirin, plavix, warfarin)

◦ diabetic education about glucose control

◦ control cardiac arrhythmias especially **A-fib**

• **surgical management:**

◦ carotid endarterectomy

◦ balloon angioplasty

• **nursing management:**

◦ frequent neuro checks to detect paralysis, confusion, facial asymmetry, aphasia

◦ monitor heart rhythm

