

Your Care Instructions

Transient global amnesia is a rare type of amnesia that causes sudden memory loss. When this happens you cannot remember events from your recent past or make new memories. You may also not know where you are, why you are there, or what the date is. You may even ask the same question many times. Unlike other types of amnesia, you do know who you are and you can recognize people that you know. An episode usually does not last more than six hours and it rarely happens again.

What causes transient global amnesia is not fully known. But, in some cases, migraines, an intense workout, sex, or stress may cause an episode.

Your doctor probably did an examination and ran some tests to rule out certain health problems that can also cause sudden memory loss such as a stroke, brain tumour, seizure, head injury, or an infection. If your doctor did not find any of these things to be the cause of your memory loss, you will not need treatment and you can go back to your usual activities. Although you may never be able to remember what happened right before or during the episode, the rest of your memory should come back.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor or nurse call line if you are having problems. It is also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

How can you care for yourself at home?

- Take good care of yourself. Eat a balanced, low-fat diet. Get plenty of rest. Limit how much alcohol you drink. Do not smoke. If you need help quitting, talk to your doctor about stop-smoking programs and medicines. These can increase your chances of quitting for good.
- Find healthy ways to deal with stress. Regular exercise is one of the best ways to manage stress.
- Talk to a counsellor if you're concerned about what happened.

When should you call for help?

Call 911 anytime you think you may need emergency care. For example, call if:

- You passed out (lost consciousness).
- You have symptoms of a stroke. These may include:

- Sudden numbness, tingling, weakness, or loss of movement in your face, arm, or leg, especially on only one side of your body.
 - Sudden vision changes.
 - Sudden trouble speaking.
 - Sudden confusion or trouble understanding simple statements.
 - Sudden problems with walking or balance.
 - A sudden, severe headache that is different from past headaches.
- You develop a fever with a stiff neck or a severe headache.
 - You do not know who you are or where you are.

Call your doctor or nurse call line now or seek immediate medical care if:

- You suddenly lose your memory again.
- You have a seizure.
- You are dizzy.
- You are more confused, forgetful, or upset than usual.
- You notice changes in your behaviour or personality.
- You begin to have trouble with familiar things, such as how to read or how to tell time.

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor or nurse call line if you have any problems.

For 24/7 nurse advice and general health information call Health Link at 811.

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