

LONG-TERM RISK AFTER STROKE WITH NO EARLY COMPLICATIONS

Question

What are the long-term risks of morbidity and mortality for patients who had no complications in the first 90 days after discharge for stroke or transient ischemic attack (TIA)?

Background

Focus of studies has been on patients who had adverse outcomes in the early high-risk period after discharge for stroke or TIA, but less is known about the long-term risks for patients who did not have any early complications.

Study

- Included ambulatory or hospitalized patients with stroke or TIA who survived for 90 days without complications.
- Measured mortality and morbidity as a combination of death, hospital admission for recurrent stroke or myocardial infarction, or admission to a long-term or continuing care facility.
- Cases were compared with controls at 1, 3 and 5 years.

Results

26 366 patients & **263 660** matched controls



2x risk of **morbidity and/or mortality** at 1 year



3x risk of **admission to a care facility** at 1 year



7x risk of **recurrent stroke** at 1 year

Risks remain high for at least 5 years

Interpretation

1. Patients who survive stroke or TIA without early complications remain at substantial long-term risk, particularly for recurrent stroke and admission to a care facility.
2. Risk-reduction strategies are required for long-term management of these initially stable but high-risk patients.
3. There is a need for long-term management of key modifiable risks for stable survivors of stroke or TIA.
4. Targets could include control of hypertension, detection and treatment of atrial fibrillation, smoking cessation and physical activity.