ST. FRANCIS 24/7 CALL CENTER: (321) 269-4240

St. Francis REFLECTIONS® Hospice
Established 1977 • Licensed 1990

Cerebral Ischemia

Cerebral ischemia occurs when blood flow to the brain is restricted, leading to insufficient oxygen and nutrients for brain tissue. Prolonged ischemia can lead to stroke or irreversible brain damage.

Common Symptoms:

Symptoms may differ from person to person

- Sudden onset of weakness or numbness in the face, arms, or legs
- Difficulty speaking or understanding speech
- Vision problems in one or both eyes
- Dizziness, loss of coordination, or balance issues
- Confusion or changes in mental status

Causes:

Potential causes:

- Cerebral ischemia occurs when blood flow to the brain is blocked. Most commonly from blood clots, blocked arteries, or a heart attack.

Hospice Considerations:

Cerebral ischemia often leads to significant disabilities and a poor prognosis. Hospice focuses on comfort measures as the disease progresses.

- **Advanced Symptoms:** When disease progresses and patients show significant motor deficits, inability to communicate, and recurrent infections.
- **Symptom Management:** When managing symptoms such as severe pain, aspiration risk, and mobility issues requires careful attention and support.
- **End-of-Life Care:** When the patient and family decide to prioritize comfort and quality of life over further invasive procedures.

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Symptom Management Tips:

- **Medication Management:** Ensure adherence to prescribed medications to prevent further ischemic events and manage symptoms.
- **Monitor Symptoms:** Keep track of neurological symptoms and report any sudden changes to hospice team.

How to Help:

- **Patient Tips:**
  - **Stay Engaged:** Participate in cognitive activities, such as reading or simple puzzles, to keep the mind active.
  - **Practice Mindfulness:** Use relaxation techniques to reduce stress and anxiety.
  - **Rest as Needed:** Allow time for rest, especially after activities that require concentration or exertion.

- **Caregiver Tips:**
  - **Assist with Mobility:** Help the patient with gentle exercises and mobility to maintain function.
  - **Monitor Changes:** Be vigilant for any changes in cognitive or physical abilities, and keep healthcare providers informed.
  - **Emotional Support:** Provide reassurance and listen to the patient's concerns about their health and future

St. Francis Reflections is always available to assist with any questions or concerns 24/7

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