

Be Aware of Some Problems That Can Arise In Your Child with Sickle Cell Disease

Stroke

What you need to KNOW

- If sickle cells block a blood vessel in the brain, a child can have a **stroke**.
- During a stroke a child might have a headache or feel weak on one side of their body. They may be unable to move a hand, arm or leg. They may limp when they walk. They may drool or be unable to speak or see clearly.
- Stroke can occur in a child with sickle cell disease as young as 10 months old.
- From two years of age, your child's doctors will do a special ultrasound test to see if your child is in danger of a stroke.
- This test is called **TCD**.
- If the doctors think your child is in danger of a stroke, they will order monthly blood transfusion for your child. This is the only way to prevent your child from having a stroke.

What you need to DO

- Know the symptoms of a stroke. Talk with your doctor about what you should look for. A child who is having a stroke may have:
 - a headache
 - unusual drooling and inability to speak clearly
 - a twisted or hanging mouth
 - a hard time moving arms or legs or using a hand
 - a limp without pain.
- Know that strokes are **very serious**.

If you think your child is having or already had a stroke take your child to the Emergency Room right away.



National Coordinating
and Evaluation Center

Sickle Cell Disease and Newborn Screening Program

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