IMAGING IN ACUTE ISCHEMIC STROKE

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Overview

- Introduction
- A brief History of Stroke Treatment
- Patient Selection: The Role of Imaging
Acute Stroke Treatment: A TEAM Approach

Workflow of a acute stroke treatment

- Detection
- Transfer to a stroke center
- Medical evaluation
  - Neurology
- Imaging
- Acute treatment
- Post operative management
- Rehabilitation
- Prevention

Patient Education
Ambulance
ER /
Neuroradiology
Neurology/INR
Stroke Unit
Rehab
Neurology

Each chain is as strong as its weakest link
The standard of care until 2014: iv TPA

Intravenous Treatments

- Proven and Approved
- Initiation very fast
- Can be widely used up to 4.5 h
- More efficient on distal occlusions
- Better results when initiated before 90 minutes

1995 NINDS, ECASS I
1998 ECASS II
2008 ECASS III
Does IV r-tPA thrombolysis work irrespective of the location of the occlusion?

- with IV tPA, the chance of successful angiographic recanalization is low for proximal large artery occlusions
  - 9% for carotid occlusions
  - 35% for M1-MCA [M1 segment middle cerebral artery] occlusions
- best for distal branch occlusions
  - 54% for M2-MCA occlusions
  - 66% for M3-MCA occlusions

*del Zoppo, Ann of Neurol 1992*
What could we do for the following patients?

- Contra-indications to IV r-tPA
- Arrival time after 4.5 hours
- Failed IV rt-PA
  - Persistent symptoms/occlusions
    - 81% Carotid occlusions
    - 70% of proximal M1 occlusions
    - Basilar occlusions
IA treatments: necessary but: no standard of care.
Intra-arterial treatment: First generation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>mRS 0-2</th>
<th>mRS 3-5</th>
<th>mRS 6</th>
<th>Recan.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Penumbra Pivotal 125</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penumbra Pilot 23</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MultiMERCI</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clot Removal (pooled)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMS II</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMS I</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROACT II Pro-UK</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROACT II control</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NINDS rt-PA</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NINDS placebo</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>24</td>
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</table>
A Randomized Trial of Intraarterial Treatment for Acute Ischemic Stroke


Randomized Assessment of Rapid Endovascular Treatment of Ischemic Stroke


Endovascular Therapy for Ischemic Stroke with Perfusion-Imaging Selection


SOLITAIRE™ FR With the Intention For Thrombectomy as PRIMary Endovascular Treatment for Acute Ischemic Stroke

Randomized Assessment of Rapid Endovascular Treatment of Ischemic Stroke

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

- Acute ischemic stroke (NIHSS > 5)
- 12 hour window
- No upper age limit
- Good functional status

- CT head: ASPECTS > 5 (exclude large core)
- CTA: ICA + M1 or M1 or functional M1 (all M2s)
- CTA (preferably multiphase): moderate to good collaterals
Methods

- 22 centres in Canada (11), US (6), Korea (3), UK (1), Ireland (1)
- tPA given when patient eligible (no waiting for tPA response)
- Imaging must have shown: small core, proximal intracranial artery occlusion, moderate-good collaterals using CT, mCTA (use of MRI discouraged)
- Intensive quality improvement program with personalized site visits
**Effect size for Intervention**

**common OR** ("shift")  
3.1 (2.0-4.7)  
[NNT ~ 3 for improvement on mRS]

mRS 0-2  
29.3% → 53.0%  
NNT = 4  
for independence

Death HR*  
19.0% → 10.4%  
0.4 (0.2-0.8)

*Adjusted for age, sex, baseline NIHSS score, baseline ASPECTS score, IV alteplase use, baseline occlusion location
Conclusion

- Endovascular thrombectomy is a safe, highly effective procedure that saves lives and dramatically reduces disability WHEN:
  - Patients are carefully selected by imaging to identify proximal occlusions, and exclude large core and exclude patients with absent collaterals
  - Treatment is extremely fast with target first slice
    - imaging $\rightarrow$ to groin puncture $< 60$ min and
    - imaging $\rightarrow$ to reperfusion $< 90$ min
  - Safe effective technology (retrievable stents) is used
The new Standard of Care

- Recommendations of the US Heart and Stroke Foundation
- Canadian Best Practice Guidelines
Current Best Practice Guidelines: Patient with acute Neurological Deficit related to ischemic stroke

Rapid initiation of ivTPA followed by mechanical thrombectomy if there is a large vessel occlusion and tissue that can be saved
Current Best Practice Guidelines: Patient with acute Neurological Deficit related to ischemic stroke

Rapid initiation of ivTPA followed by mechanical thrombectomy if there is a large vessel occlusion and tissue that can be saved
Estimated Pace of Neural Circuitry Loss in Typical Large Vessel, Supratentorial Acute Ischemic Stroke

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Neurons Lost</th>
<th>Synapses Lost</th>
<th>Myelinated Fibers Lost</th>
<th>Accelerated Aging</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Per Stroke</td>
<td>1.2 billion</td>
<td>8.3 trillion</td>
<td>7140 km/4470 miles</td>
<td>36 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Hour</td>
<td>120 billion</td>
<td>830 billion</td>
<td>714/447 miles</td>
<td>3.6 yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Minute</td>
<td><strong>1.9 million</strong></td>
<td>14 billion</td>
<td>12 km/7.5 miles</td>
<td>3.1 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Second</td>
<td>32,000</td>
<td>230 million</td>
<td>200 meters/218 yards</td>
<td>8.7 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Modified from: Saver et al
Rapid Initiation of Treatment
TIME IS BRAIN

• Each hour in which treatment does not occur, the brain loses as many neurons as it does in almost 3.6 years of normal aging

• Rapid initiation of treatment is key!
1st Key Point in Imaging

Choose a fast Imaging Modality
SPEED in acute Stroke Imaging

CT

- Available 24/7
- No screening
- CT/CTA: 3min
- Postprocessing 24/7 5 min
Current Best Practice Guidelines: Patient with acute Neurological Deficit related to ischemic stroke

Rapid initiation of ivTPA followed by mechanical thrombectomy if there is a large vessel occlusion and tissue that can be saved
2nd Key Point in Imaging

Choose an Imaging Modality that can exclude hemorrhage

UNENHANCED CT
Current Best Practice Guidelines: Patient with acute Neurological Deficit related to ischemic stroke

Rapid initiation of ivTPA followed by mechanical thrombectomy if there is a large vessel occlusion and tissue that can be saved
Determine if access to the clot is possible and safe
3rd Key Point in Imaging

Choose an Imaging Modality that can evaluate access to the site of occlusion

CTA Head and Neck including Arch
Current Best Practice Guidelines: Patient with acute Neurological Deficit related to ischemic stroke

Rapid initiation of ivTPA followed by mechanical thrombectomy if there is a large vessel occlusion and tissue that can be saved
Hyperdense clot in artery is present in up to 41% of cases.
Determine site of occlusion:
Large vessel (proximal) vs small vessel (distal)
4th Key Point in Imaging

Choose an Imaging Modality that can evaluate the site of occlusion

Unenhanced CT (Dense Vessel) and CTA Head and Neck with multiplanar reformats
Current Best Practice Guidelines: Patient with acute Neurological Deficit related to ischemic stroke

Rapid initiation of ivTPA followed by mechanical thrombectomy if there is a large vessel occlusion and tissue that can be saved
Determine how much tissue is irreversibly damaged and how much tissue is at risk

- Dead brain will not recover after recanalization
- Dead brain has a high risk for hemorrhagic transformation
Ischemic Injury on CT

• Subtle decreased attenuation of grey matter
  – loss of grey - white differentiation
  – loss of cortical ribbon (look at insular cortex)
  – “disappearing basal ganglia”
• Early mass effect
  – sulcal effacement
  – shift

requires good quality CT with 5 mm sections
ASPECTS score

Alberta Stroke Program Early CT Score

Developed in Calgary, Alberta, Canada

A reproducible grading system to assess early ischemic changes on non-enhanced CT studies in patients with an acute ischemic stroke of the anterior circulation.

The MCA territory is divided into 10 areas.

Normal CT – ASPECTS 10

Every area with loss of gray-white matter differentiation reduces 1 from the score.
ASPECTS score

C - Caudate nucleus
IC - Internal capsule
L - Lentiform nucleus
I - Insular ribbon
M1 - Anterior MCA cortex
M2 - MCA cortex lateral to insular ribbon
M3 - Posterior MCA cortex
M4, M5, M6 - Anterior, lateral, posterior MCA territories immediately superior to M1, M2 and M3 rostral to basal ganglia.

Subcortical structures are allotted 3 points (C, L, and IC).

MCA cortex is allotted 7 points (IC, M1, M2, M3, M4, M5 and M6).
84 F 6 hrs post onset acute stroke

CTA source images

“collapse CTA view”
The role of delayed vascular imaging
second pass, 10 second delay
Assessing Leptomeningeal Collaterals

Arterial

Delay

Single phase CT – can underestimate the filling of leptomeningeal collateral and can mislabel a patient with sufficient collaterals as insufficient.
Is Collateral Flow Associated with...

...Baseline NIHSS?

Baseline NIHSS score Correlates with Collateral score:

Miteff et al, Brain 2009; 132:2231-38

**Significant difference in median acute NIHSS between good and reduced collateral groups** *(NIHSS 16 vs 18 \( P=0.012 \)).* Left and right hemisphere strokes equally distributed between groups

Menon et al, AJNR 2011;32:1640-45

In multivariable analysis *poor collaterals score was associated with higher baseline NIHSS score* *(OR 1.1 per 1 point increase in NIHSS \( P=0.04 \))*. 
Is Collateral Flow Associated with...

...Baseline ASPECTS score?

*Lima et al, Stroke 2010; 41:2316-22*

*Patients with “equal” or “greater” collaterals had higher baseline ASPECTS than those with “less” collaterals* (*P*=0.02)

...Baseline DWI volume?

*Souza et al, AJNR 2012;33:1331-36*

*Admission DWI lesion volume was an independent variable associated with collateral score* on multivariable analysis (*P*<0.001)
Is Collateral Flow Associated with...

...Final infarct volume?

*Tan et al, AJNR 2009;30:525-31*

Collateral score was associated with final infarct size on multivariate linear regression analysis \( (P=0.04) \). Collateral score predicts final infarct size but does not independently predict clinical outcome.

...Follow up CT ASPECTS score?

*Menon et al, AJNR 2011;32:1640-45*

Better collateral status showed strong correlation with higher follow up CT ASPECTS score \( (\text{Spearman } r=0.58 \ P<0.001) \)
Clinical factors found to be predictive of hemorrhage were: poor pial collateral formation (OR 3.03, \( P=0.342 \)), platelets <200,000/\( \mu \)L (OR 2.95 \( P=0.403 \)), diabetes (OR 4.82 \( P=0.01 \)), and time to treatment > 3 hours (OR 12.0 \( P=0.033 \)).

Multivariable analysis identified only poor pial collateral formation as a statistically significant predictor for symptomatic hemorrhage (OR 6.8, \( P=0.0286 \)).
Is Collateral Flow Associated with... 
...Clinical Outcome?

*Miteff et al, Brain 2009; 132:2231-38*
In multivariable analysis **good collateral status was an independent predictor of good outcome** (mRS 0-2 at 3 months)

*Menon et al, AJNR 2011;32:1640-45*
In multivariable analysis collateral score was an independent predictor of good clinical outcome (mRS 0-2 at 3 months)
(OR 16.7 for Good vs Poor collateral score; OR 9.2 for Medium vs Poor collateral score)

*Lima et al, Stroke 2010; 41:2316-22*
Pattern of leptomeningeal collaterals was significantly associated with good outcome (mRS 0-2 at 6 months)  OR 1.93  *P*=0.03
Interventional Cohort

- Nambiar et al AJNR 2014; 35:884-90

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RECANALIZED PATIENTS</th>
<th>NON-RECANALIZED PATIENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infarct growth significantly lower in good collateral group compared to intermediate or poor groups ($P=0.05$)</td>
<td>No significant difference in infarct growth stratified by collateral status ($P=0.09$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher good clinical outcome among patients with good collateral status ($P=0.04$)</td>
<td>No significant difference in good clinical outcome stratified by collateral status ($P=0.67$)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Collateral status** | **mRS 0-2** | **mRS 0-2**
--- | --- | ---
**Good** | 100% | 30.8% |
**Intermediate:** | 58.8% | 17.6% |
**Poor** | 33.3% | 18.2% |
Determine how much tissue is irreversibly damaged and how much tissue is at risk

- Futility of Treatment if there is no tissue that can be saved
- Potential harm of both ivTPA and Thrombectomy

Mismatch between dead tissue and Clinical Findings

Mismatch between dead tissue and Angiography
5th Key Point in Imaging

Choose an Imaging Modality that can evaluate

a) whether brain tissue is still “alive”
   Unenhanced CT: ASPECTS
   first pass CTA rawdata and collateral score (delayed CTA)

b) whether brain tissue is “at risk”
   Mismatch CTA vs delayed CTA
Key Points in acute Stroke Imaging

Choose an Imaging Modality that

- is the fastest in your hospital setting
- can exclude hemorrhage
- can evaluate access to the site of occlusion
- can determine the site of occlusion
- can evaluate whether treatment makes sense:
  - Is brain tissue still “alive”
  - Is brain tissue “at risk”

- CT
  - Plain CT
  - CTA Head and Neck
  - Multiplanar reformats
  - CT Aspects
  - CTA First pass
  - CTA Second Pass (Collaterals)
  - Mismatch
Fast CT Stroke Protocol & Workflow

• Localizer

• Unenhanced CT Brain → exclude Hemorrhage, determine ASPECTS

• CTA Head and Neck → evaluate access to and site of occlusion

• CTA Brain 2
  nd phase (10 sec) → evaluate collaterals / ie dead brain

• Send unenhanced CT, axial, coronal and sagittal Recons of both CTAs (not the 0.5mm source data) to ENITS
Fast CT Stroke Protocol & Workflow

• Send to ENITS in this order:

  • unenhanced CT
  • Axial CTA Head and Neck (1.25mm-2mm slice thickness)
  • Axial delayed CTA MIP (5mm)

• Coronal and sagittal Recons of Head and Neck CTA (first pass)
• **Do not send your 0.5mm Source Data!**
Questions?

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