STROKE (CEREBROVASCULAR ACCIDENT)

Stroke, or Cerebrovascular Accident (CVA), is Australia’s second single greatest killer after coronary artery disease. Stroke occurs when the blood supply to the brain is interrupted suddenly either by a blockage in an artery or by a rupture of an artery causing bleeding within the brain. When this happens, part of the brain is no longer receiving oxygen and those brain cells begin to die within the hour but can sometimes survive for up to several hours, provided that prompt medical intervention is instigated.

Transient Ischaemic Attack (TIA) sometimes called a ‘mini stroke’, is a minor blockage which resolves itself but presents with the same symptoms and signs as a CVA for a period lasting from a few minutes to several hours. Medical attention should be sought immediately for a TIA as it can lead to a major CVA.

Stroke can happen at any age and is in the top 10 causes of death in childhood. However, the likelihood increases with advancing years.

Care of a stroke victim is time critical so act FAST:

Face Can the victim smile? Has the face or mouth drooped?