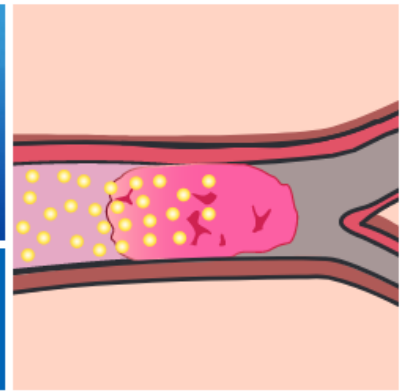


# Treating a stroke with medication

## Thrombolysis

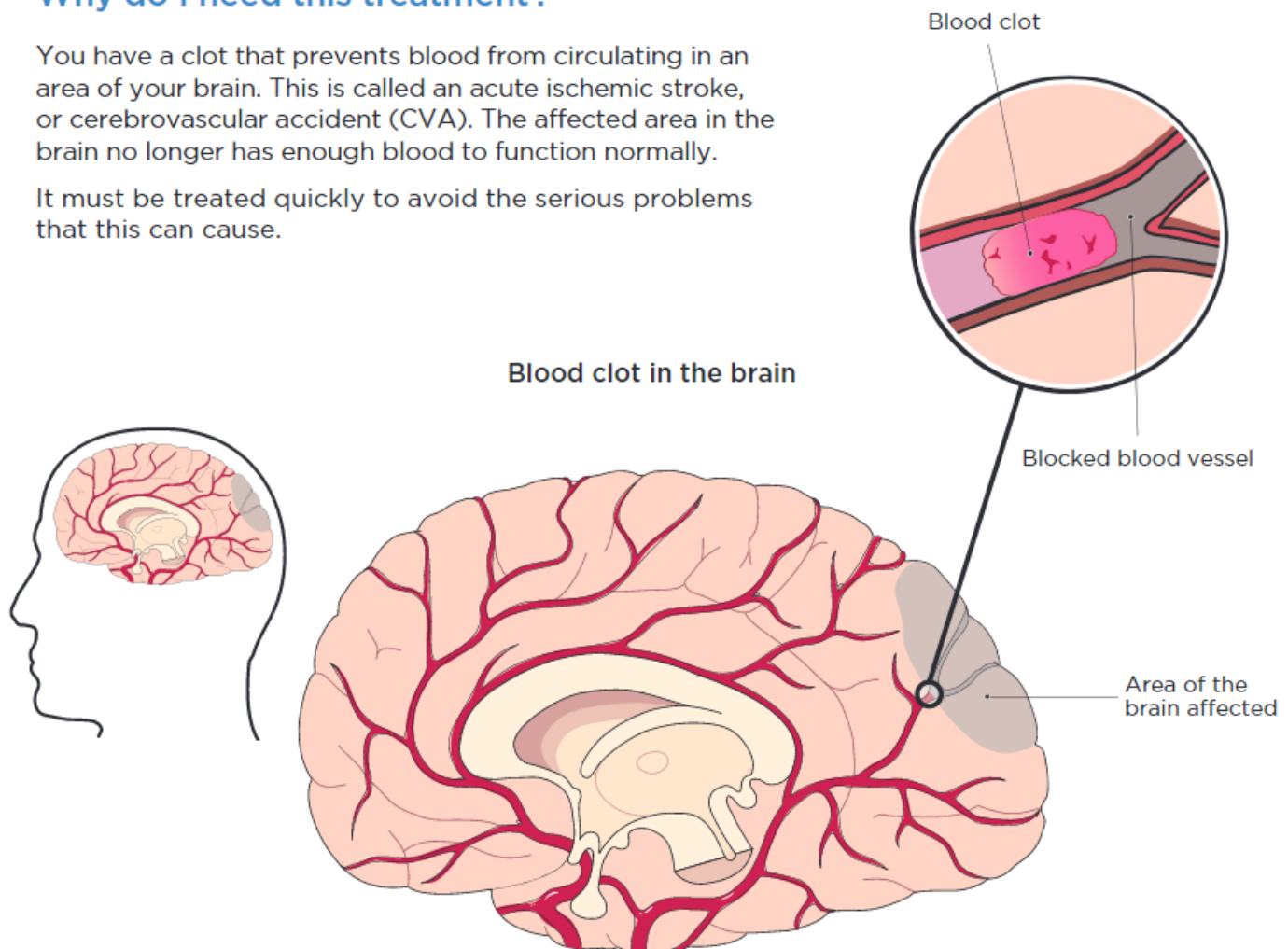


You will soon receive or have just received medication to destroy a blood clot in a vessel of your brain. This treatment is called thrombolysis. This fact sheet describes how the treatment works and what to do next.

### Why do I need this treatment?

You have a clot that prevents blood from circulating in an area of your brain. This is called an acute ischemic stroke, or cerebrovascular accident (CVA). The affected area in the brain no longer has enough blood to function normally.

It must be treated quickly to avoid the serious problems that this can cause.

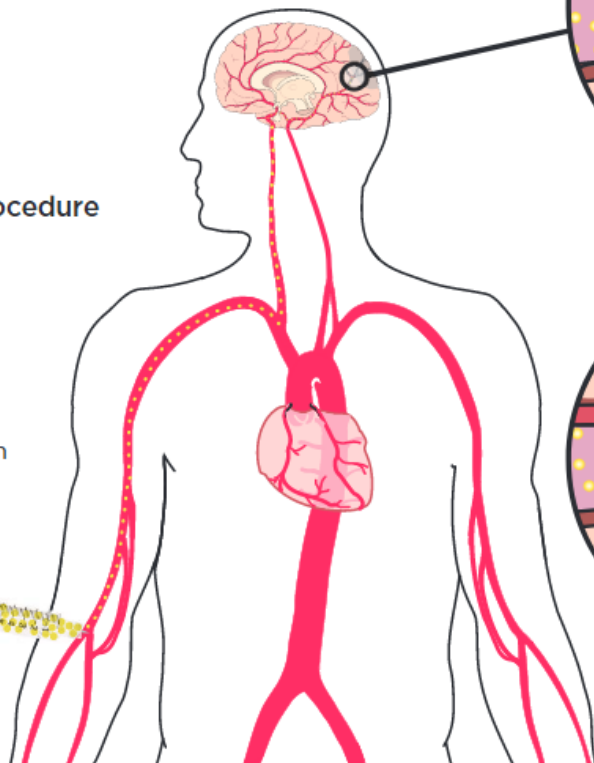


## How does this treatment work?

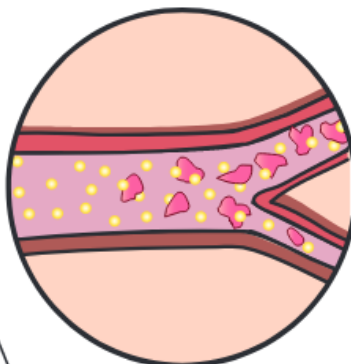
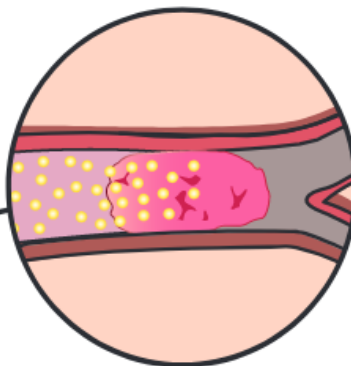
A drug called Alteplase will be used to destroy the clot. This is called thrombolysis. This treatment is not painful.

### Steps of the procedure

**1** The medication is injected into a vein.



**2** The medication flows through the blood stream to get to the clot.



**3** The medication "breaks down" the clot into small pieces that will be eliminated along with other blood waste products.

## What are the risks associated with this treatment?

Possible risks are:

- bleeding (hemorrhage): in the brain, urine, nose, stomach, intestines, or elsewhere
- allergic reaction to the drug (swelling of the lips, tongue, or throat, which can lead to problems with breathing or swallowing)

If any of these things happen, your care team will immediately take measures to treat the problem.

## Are there contra-indications to this treatment?

This treatment cannot be done if:

- the symptoms have been present for too long
- you have a stroke that is not caused by a clot, but rather by a blood build-up in the brain (hemorrhagic stroke)
- your blood pressure is high despite treatment to lower it
- your risk of bleeding is too high