

Is clot-busting drug safe for kids with strokes?

February 17 2012

New research looks at whether clot-busting drugs can safely be given to children who have strokes. The research was released today and will be presented at the American Academy of Neurology's 64th Annual Meeting in New Orleans April 21 to April 28, 2012.

In adults, the clot-busting drugs can reduce disability if given within a few hours after [stroke symptoms](#) begin. But few studies have looked at whether the drugs are safe for children.

The study used a [national database](#) to look at all children admitted to a hospital with a diagnosis of ischemic stroke from 1998 to 2009. Only ischemic strokes can be treated with clot-busting drugs; they are the most common type of stroke.

Of the 9,367 children who were admitted with [ischemic stroke](#), only 75 children, or 0.8 percent, received clot-busting drugs, also called thrombolytic therapy. Intracerebral [hemorrhage](#), or bleeding in the brain, is a risk of thrombolytic therapy. The four percent rate of hemorrhage in the 75 kids who received thrombolytic therapy was higher than the 0.38 percent rate in kids who did not receive the therapy, but it was similar to the rate in adults who receive thrombolytic therapy.

Children who received thrombolytic therapy were no more likely to die following the stroke than those who did not receive the therapy.

"These findings provide evidence that clot-busting drugs can be safely

used with children," said study author Amer Alsheklee, MD, of St. Louis University in St. Louis. "More research is needed to determine whether the drugs are as effective in preventing disability from stroke in children as they are in adults."

The children in the study who received the therapy were older than those who did not, an average of 13 years old compared to eight years old. There were no differences in treatment regarding race, gender, or family income.

Provided by American Academy of Neurology

Citation: Is clot-busting drug safe for kids with strokes? (2012, February 17) retrieved 19 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2012-02-clot-busting-drug-safe-kids.html>

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