Introduction:

The Cincinnati Prehospital Stroke Scale is a system used to diagnose a potential stroke in a pre-hospital setting. It tests three signs for abnormal findings which may indicate that the patient is having a stroke.

If any of these indications are present you must act FAST.

FAST is an acronym for:

F - Facial

A - Arms

S - Speech

T - Time which is critical

References

Kothari RU, Pancioli A, Liu T, Brott T, Broderick J. "Cincinnati Prehospital Stroke Scale: reproducibility and validity."

Ann Emerg Med 1999 Apr;33(4):373-8

Facial Droop

Normal: Both sides of face move equally

Abnormal: One side of face does not move at all

Ask the Patient to Smile

Arm Drift

Normal: Both arms move equally or not at all

Abnormal: One arm drifts compared to the other

Ask the Patient to raise both arms together. Does one drift downward?

Is one Arm weak or numb?

Speech

Normal: Patient uses correct words with no slurring

Abnormal: Slurred or inappropriate words or mute

Is the speech slurred? Ask the Patient to repeat a simple sentence. Is the sentence repeated correctly?

Cincinnati

Time is Critical