Vertebrobasilar Syndrome

Your exam shows your symptoms may be due to poor circulation through the vertebrobasilar arteries. These blood vessels supply the base of the brain. When they are blocked the following symptoms may develop:

- Numbness/weakness of the arms and legs or both sides of the body.
- Sudden onset of severe dizziness (*vertigo*)
- Nausea and vomiting
- Double vision, slurred speech and/or trouble swallowing
- Headache in the back of the head

Most of the time, the symptoms clear up in a short period. These episodes are called TIA's (transient ischemic attacks). **TIA's are a warning sign that you are at serious risk for having a stroke**.

Treatment for vertebrobasilar disease includes a thorough medical exam. Special studies for brain circulation (ultrasound, CT, or MRI) may be needed to locate the exact problem. Medicines which thin the blood such as aspirin may help reduce the risk of having a stroke. Cigarette smoking will make this condition worse.

CONTACT YOUR CAREGIVER OR THE EMERGENCY ROOM RIGHT AWAY IF YOU HAVE:

- **Severe dizziness, falling down or repeated vomiting.**
- **Severe headaches, unusual weakness or numbness in your body.**
- **Changes in your vision or your ability to speak or swallow normally.**
- **Confusion, bizarre behavior, or delusions.**

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