

Stroke (CVA): Symptom identification, FAST protocol, and initial management

Dhiego Alves de Lacerda¹, Pedro Fechine Honorato², José George Ferreira de Albuquerque³, Luennia Kerlly Alves Rocha de Araujo⁴, Francisco Glauter Araujo Rocha⁵, Cícera Luciana Pereira de Lucena⁶, Ingrid Michelle de Moura Leite⁷, Heitor Estrela Celeste⁸, Valentim Fragoso de Freitas Neto⁹, Ayla Alves Cavalcante¹⁰, Guidance Professor: Dr. Thays Costa Gomes¹¹.

ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION: Stroke (CVA) represents a prevalent medical emergency characterized by the obstruction or rupture of cerebral blood vessels, resulting in acute neuronal damage. Prompt identification of clinical signs is crucial for immediate therapeutic intervention and minimizing sequelae. **OBJECTIVE:** This study aims to review and synthesize recent literature on the characteristic symptoms of stroke, the use of the FAST protocol for rapid screening, and recommended initial management. **METHODOLOGY:** An integrative review was conducted using the search terms "Stroke", "symptoms", "FAST protocol", and "initial management" in the SCIELO and PubMed databases. Initially, 50 articles were identified, of which 30 were selected as relevant for this study. **RESULTS:** Common symptoms of stroke include sudden unilateral weakness, speech difficulty, and visual loss. The FAST protocol (Face, Arms, Speech, Time) is an effective tool for initial screening, allowing the identification of stroke signs such as facial asymmetry, weakness in one arm, speech difficulties, and determination of symptom onset time. **CONCLUSIONS:** Diligent implementation of the FAST protocol in the initial management of stroke is crucial for optimizing clinical outcomes. Continuous education of healthcare professionals and public awareness are essential to promote early recognition of symptoms and prompt medical assistance.

Keywords: Stroke, Symptoms, FAST protocol, Initial management.

¹ Centro Universitário Santa Maria – PB

² Centro Universitário Santa Maria – PB

³ Centro Universitário Santa Maria – PB

⁴ Centro Universitário Santa Maria – PB

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⁸ Centro Universitário Santa Maria – PB

⁹ Centro Universitário Santa Maria – PB

¹⁰ Centro Universitário Santa Maria – PB

¹¹ Centro Universitário Santa Maria – PB