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"HOW CAN WE SHORTEN TIME TO TREATMENT IN ACUTE STROKE? – THE TIME WINDOW IN NEUROPROTECTION (TWIN) STUDY"

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Stroke is one of the most feared medical emergencies, affecting around 40,000 Australians every year and being the most common reason for people becoming disabled. There are now effective treatments, for instance clot busting drugs, which reduce death and disability, but these have to be given within hours of stroke onset and can only safely be given in hospitals.

Some common drugs - for instance vitamin B3, melatonin, minocyline, caffeine - work in experimental stroke and are known to be safe. The sooner these drugs are given, the more effective they are likely to be. Because they are safe, they could be given at first contact with health services, by the attending ambulance crew.

The TWIN study plans to test a combination of such drugs in patients presenting to MAS (Metropolitan Ambulance Service) with symptoms of acute stroke. The primary end point will be death or disability at 6 months.

This is a new approach to stroke research, involving for the first time professionals responsible for pre-hospital patient care. We hope to develop treatments that could be given to patients in rural areas as well as in cities that would reduce the burden of stroke.