



**NTSB** National Transportation Safety Board

*Office of Aviation Safety*



## **Medical Issues**

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Photo by John Olafson  
available at [www.veer.com](http://www.veer.com)

# Stroke

- Cerebrovascular accident (CVA):  
An event resulting in neurological symptoms due to blood flow abnormalities in the brain
  - Blockage: ischemic stroke
  - Bleeding: hemorrhagic stroke or (spontaneous) intracerebral hemorrhage

# Pilot FAA Medical Records

- 3/22/2006 – Intracerebral hemorrhage
  - Weakness, confusion, sleepiness
  - Recovered, home 6 days later
  - Summer: “performance subpar”
  - No cause, extensive family history
  - Neurology evaluation, MRI, MR angiography– all normal

# Pilot FAA Medical Records

- No cognitive testing, no risk evaluation, no FAA neurology consultation
- First-class certificate (Alaska Regional Flight Surgeon):
  - 3/26/2008: operation of aircraft prohibited any time new symptoms, adverse changes occur



# Autopsy

- Alaska ME, consultant, AFIP
- Findings:
  - Scarring consistent with old stroke
  - No new brain hemorrhage
  - Decreased blood flow (postimpact)
  - Variants in examination of heart
  - No evidence of impairment (not necessarily expected)

# Aeromedical Concerns

- Increased risk of subsequent stroke
- Cognitive and/or motor impairment
- Increased risk of seizure

# Possible Medical Scenarios

- Stroke – not hemorrhagic
- Persistent cognitive impairment
- Seizure
- Non-neurologic event



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