

Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus

Hydrocephalus is a condition where an imbalance between the amount of cerebral spinal fluid (CSF) produced and the rate by which it is absorbed causes the ventricles to enlarge and the pressure inside the head to increase. As one of the most common neurological problems in both adults and children, hydrocephalus accounts for approximately 70,000 hospital admissions in the United States each year [1]. In 1965, Hakim and Adams brought to attention normal pressure hydrocephalus (NPH) - hydrocephalus in adults that does not have the associated increase in CSF pressure [2]. Patients with NPH often have a combination of dementia, gait disturbance and urinary incontinence, which makes it difficult to distinguish this condition from Alzheimer's disease or other causes of dementia.

The progressive mental and physical impairments associated with NPH interfere with normal activities and significantly reduce quality of life. Often, the symptoms usually worsen over time, unless the condition is treated.

Treatment for hydrocephalus is often a shunt procedure [3]. During the past 30 years, the survival and quality of life has dramatically increased in this population, due in part to the development of valve-regulated shunting systems. These valve designs could be broadly classified as differential pressure, siphon control, and flow-regulated valves [1]. Despite the success of these shunts, however, CSF drainage is often associated with several complications, including infection, shunt obstruction, overdrainage and underdrainage [3]. Overdrainage is thought to induce slit ventricle syndrome and subdural hygromas while underdrainage is manifested by the failure of the ventricles to decrease in size and the persistence of symptoms [4]. Further complicating this is that the optimal drainage pressure may vary over the patient's lifetime.

You are being asked to participate in a registry of patients being treated for Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus. The purpose of this registry is to utilize an electronic database to collect data on the different treatments of patients with normal pressure hydrocephalus (NPH) and outcomes of these treatments. It is hoped that this information will help your doctor and other doctors learn to improve the process by which patients like you are treated for NPH. You were selected as a possible patient for this registry because you have been diagnosed with NPH and are in the process of seeking treatment for this condition. Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus

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