

WHAT IS HYDROCEPHALUS?

Hydrocephalus

A collection of fluid (Cerebral Spinal fluid) on the brain causing pressure which can be very damaging and even be fatal.

Symptoms

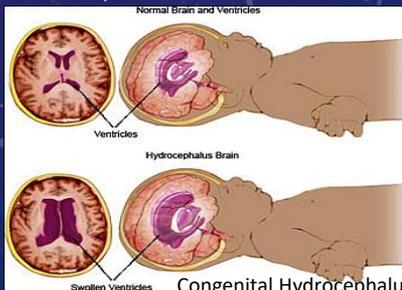
Headache
Nausea and vomiting
Dizziness
Vision impairment
Physical impairment

Causes:

Cerebral Spinal Fluid building up. The brain produces about a pint a day and the old fluid is released and absorbed by the body. When that process is interrupted it quickly builds up causing the pressure.

Types of Hydrocephalus

Congenital – Present at birth
Acquired – Developed after birth
Normal pressure – Usually develops in elderly



Congenital Hydrocephalus:

- ❖ The baby was born with fluid on the brain.
- ❖ This is caused by another disease such as spina bifida, or developed from the mother having infections such as mumps or rubella.
- ❖ Can cause brain damage which include complications of; Learning disabilities, impaired speech, low attention span, vision impairment, problems with physical skills, and even epilepsy.
- ❖ The child will most likely need Special Education Needs (SEN)

Acquired Hydrocephalus:

- ❖ Can effect children and adults and usually has onset after an injury or an illness.
- ❖ This means it can arise after a serious head injury or a complication with a tumor or brain surgery.

Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus:

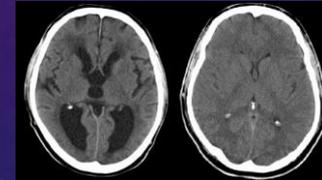
- ❖ Typically an unknown cause and is not understood to its full capacity.
- ❖ Commonly effects people over the age of 60 and while the cause is unknown some think it arises from strokes or brain injury.
- ❖ Dementia and urinary incontinence are main symptoms

References:

- ❖ National Health Service. *Hydrocephalus*. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/hydrocephalus/>
- ❖ National Health Service. *Hydrocephalus Diagnosis*. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/hydrocephalus/diagnosis/>

Diagnosing Hydrocephalus:

Brain scans such as CT and MRI are mainly used to diagnose congenital and acquired. These scans show greater detail and will allow a radiologist to see build up of fluid and increased pressure, also highlighting any structural defects that may be causing these problems.



Treatment:

Having fluid on the brain requires prompt treatment to reduce pressure. Shunt surgery is most popular, it is a surgically implanted thin tube into the brain to release fluid to another area of the body to be released.

Complications:

Shunt becoming blocked or infected. In most cases when this happens an x-ray is used to help discover the complication.

