



November 24, 2009

**Vancouver Island Multiple Sclerosis Clinic
Assessment of Chronic Cerebrospinal Venous Insufficiency Theory
As a causation of MS and the “Liberation” procedure**

There has been recent widespread interest in Canada and throughout the world in the research of Dr. Paolo Zamboni who has proposed a theory of venous abnormalities at the base of the brain causing chronic cerebrospinal venous insufficiency to explain the cause of MS. As well he has developed a novel potential treatment for MS, which appears to hold promise. His work has been published in creditable peer reviewed medical journals.

At the present time, this represents an interesting scientific observation and needs to be validated by other researchers at other centres before it can be accepted as a widespread phenomenon in MS patients. It is unclear if the observed venous abnormalities by Dr. Zamboni's group represent a true cause of MS.

The techniques used by Dr. Zamboni to investigate for chronic cerebrospinal venous insufficiency are technically difficult and not widely available. Most medical centres in Canada would not have the same techniques to investigate for this condition. Other techniques, such as CT venography and MR venography will be studied as part of research protocols to determine if these other investigations can be used to find similar results to Dr. Zamboni's results.

The treatment of chronic cerebrospinal venous insufficiency is experimental at this time. This therapy is not routinely available in centres throughout the world. The treatment of chronic cerebrospinal venous insufficiency with the “liberation procedure” which represents a type of endovascular procedure for treatment of the blocked or narrowed veins is of potential benefit but requires further research before it can be adopted as a standard of treatment in Multiple Sclerosis. The possibility of this type of treatment does not negate the benefits of the current available immunomodulatory therapy treatments for MS including the interferons, Tysabri or Mitoxantrone. Patients on these disease modifying drugs should continue them until the precise role of treatment for venous insufficiency is determined.

The Canadian Multiple Sclerosis Society is actively soliciting from qualified researchers protocols to investigate the chronic cerebrospinal fluid venous insufficiency theory. As these research projects develop the potential for Vancouver Island MS patients to be enrolled in these investigations and trials exists. The MS clinic will keep abreast of these developments and as sites become known we will provide patients with the contacts to determine if they could voluntarily participate in the research projects.

Both the MS Society of Canada and The National Multiple Sclerosis Society of America have published position papers on the topic of chronic cerebrospinal venous insufficiency and the liberation procedure. For persons interested in pursuing this further, these are available online.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Wayne Shtybel", with a horizontal line underneath the name.

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MS Clinic - Assessment of Chronic Cerebrospinal Venous Insufficiency