



20 Powerful Facts About Hydrocephalus

1. Hydrocephalus is a life threatening condition that affects more than 1 million Americans.
2. Anyone, at any age, can develop hydrocephalus.
3. One out of every 770 babies will develop hydrocephalus, making it as common as Down's syndrome and more common than spina bifida or brain tumors.
4. There is no way to prevent hydrocephalus and there is no cure. The only known treatment requires brain surgery.
5. Hydrocephalus is the most common reason for brain surgery in children.
6. The most common treatment for hydrocephalus is the surgical placement of a medical device called a shunt, which has one of the highest failure rates of any medical device on the market.
7. An estimated 50% of shunts in the pediatric population fail within two years of placement and repeated neurosurgical operations are often required.
8. There are approximately 10,000 pediatric hospital admissions for shunt malfunctions each year.
9. Hydrocephalus and a shunt can mean a lifetime of multiple brain surgeries. Dozens of brain surgeries are common and 100 or more is not unheard of.
10. The core technology used to develop the shunt has not changed significantly since the 1950's.
11. Over 36,000 shunt surgeries are performed each year (one every 15 minutes) and more than half of them represent emergencies.
12. Pediatric hydrocephalus alone accounts for more than 40,000 hospital admissions each year (around 400,000 hospital days.)
13. The hospital charges for hydrocephalus are over \$2 billion per year.
14. Up to half (50%) of infants diagnosed with hydrocephalus will have a learning disability.
15. Since 2000, more than 370,000 U.S. service members have sustained a traumatic brain injury, one cause of hydrocephalus. It is estimated that 14% of those who suffered a severe TBI could develop hydrocephalus.
16. An estimated 800,000 older Americans are believed to have NPH, but often are misdiagnosed as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's or dementia. When correctly diagnosed and treated, the patient often can return to full functioning!
17. Accurately diagnosing adult hydrocephalus would save Medicare in excess of \$184M over five years.
18. The Hydrocephalus Association provides support and education to individuals, families and medical professionals dealing with the complex issues of this condition.
19. Since 2009, HA has committed over \$13.8 million to research, making it the largest non-profit, non-governmental funder of hydrocephalus research in the U.S. Our grantees and Research Networks have gone on to secure over \$73.8 million in additional research funding from sources like the NIH and DoD.
20. **It's time for a CURE!**