

Oral presentation

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Concerns of parents of children with shunted hydrocephalus

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from 52nd Annual Meeting of the Society for Research into Hydrocephalus and Spina Bifida
Providence, RI, USA. 11–14 June 2008

Published: 3 February 2009

Cerebrospinal Fluid Research 2009, **6**(Suppl 1):S43 doi:10.1186/1743-8454-6-S1-S43

This abstract is available from: <http://www.cerebrospinalfluidresearch.com/content/6/S1/S43>

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Background

The parents of children with hydrocephalus often have concerns about their child's health and future.

Materials and methods

A nine items questionnaire created by Kulkarni (2006) was used to analyse parents concerns specifically. The answers were graduated from "not at all true" to "very true" in a 5-point adjectival scale. Parents were asked to rate how concerned they were about each item. We collected also information about age, education, job and partnership and in addition about general health status, genesis of hydrocephalus, count of revisions, epilepsy and shunt infections. We analysed questionnaires completed by 37 mothers and 6 fathers of 43 children with shunted hydrocephalus (19 females, 24 males, mean age 10 y 2 mo).

Results

About the child's ability to take care of a family in the future or to maintain friendships more than 50% of the parents are not concerned. More than 70% of the parents are concerned about the possibility of shunt revisions in the future. Four mothers within our sample were 'very concerned' about almost all items asked.

The parents of older children are more concern in social life problems than in shunt problems. Younger patients are appeared with greater parental concern about the need of future shunt surgery, blockage and shunt-infection.

Parents of children without any episode of shunt infection in the history were "very true" concerned that the child's shunt will become infected in 62%.

There is a strong positive correlation between seizure disorder and concerns of parents of affected children.

Conclusion

There are various support mechanisms available in our hospital and in the region. The results allow a more accurate offering of the possibilities to children and parents. Also the education of the parents can make more effective and precise reflecting the individual results.