Hydrocephalus Research Funding at the National Institutes of Health (NIH)

Hydrocephalus is a serious chronic neurological condition characterized by the abnormal buildup of cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) in the brain**.**

- **Hydrocephalus occurs in 1-2 per 1000 children born in the United States.**
- **A form of it, Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus, affects older adults as well, often going undiagnosed or misdiagnosed as dementia (from Alzheimer's or Parkinson's diseases).**
- **Hydrocephalus is also a factor in as many as two thirds of our veterans living with moderate to severe traumatic brain injuries (TBI).**

Treatment for hydrocephalus requires implantation of a shunt to drain the excess fluid from the brain. Unfortunately, shunt technology was invented over 50 years ago and is unreliable. Shunts fail frequently and infection rates are unacceptably high, causing thousands of expensive surgeries annually and prolonged medical care. **Although shunts save lives, for various reasons they have the highest failure rate of any medically-implanted device, with half of all shunts failing within two years. This reality adds a quality of life challenge and a financial burden to patients, their families and our entire health care system. Furthermore, multiple brain surgeries compromise patient safety by exposing those needing multiple shunt revisions to risks associated with infection and other long-term complications, such as vision problems, learning disabilities, etc.**

Despite the great need, the National Institute of Health's (NIH) support for research into new treatments for hydrocephalus has decreased in the last few years.

We ask that Congress support a significant expansion of the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) current efforts to establish a broader collaborative research effort into the incidence, causes and treatments of hydrocephalus.

Hydrocephalus Association
Toll Free (888) 5983789
Fax (415) 732-7044
www.HydroAssoc.org
info@HydroAssoc.org