

Fast Facts

Hydrocephalus

- Occurs when there's an excess of cerebrospinal fluid in the cavities (ventricles) of the brain
- Cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) is produced by the tissues that line the ventricles and flows between them through interconnecting channels
- CSF also flows freely into the areas around the brain and spinal column
- CSF helps to keep brain floating inside skull and provides cushioning to protect it from injury
- CSF also removes waste products of the brain's metabolism
- CSF is absorbed by blood vessels in tissues near the base of the brain
- Sometimes, there's too much cerebrospinal fluid resulting in the pressure inside skull to increase and can lead to brain tissue damage and a variety of impairments
- Three reasons: partial obstruction, blood vessels that absorb the CSF aren't functioning properly, and CSF is that it's been produced faster than it can be absorbed
- Can happen at any age, but more likely in infant and adults over 60

<i>Symptoms</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Prevention</i>
<p><i>Infants:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Changes to head, such as an unusually large head, a rapid increase in the head's size, or a bulging/tense soft spot (fontanel) on the top of the head -Vomiting -Sleepiness -Irritability -Poor feeding -Seizures -Eyes fixed downward (sunsetting of the eyes) -Muscle tone/strength deficits -Poor responsiveness to touch -Poor growth <p><i>Toddlers/Older Children:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Headache -Blurred/double vision -Sunsetting of eyes -Abnormal enlargement of a toddler's head -Sleepiness/lethargy -Nausea/vomiting -Unstable balance -Poor coordination -Poor appetite -Seizures -Urinary incontinence -Irritability 	<p><i>Surgery:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Shunt -Endoscopic third ventriculostomy 	<p><i>Live a healthy lifestyle:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Exercising regularly -Eating nutritious meals -Limiting alcohol/caffeine -Avoiding smoking/illegal drugs -Getting plenty of good quality sleep <p>-If you're a woman considering pregnancy, talk to your doctor about any concerns you have regarding hydrocephalus and what precautions you should be taking</p> <p>-Get meningitis vaccine (if recommended)</p>

- Change in personality
- Decline in school performance
- Delays with previously acquired skills (ex. walking or talking)

Young/Middle-Aged Adults:

- Headache
- Lethargy
- Loss of coordination/balance
- Loss of bladder control
- Frequent urge to urinate
- Impaired vision
- Decline in memory/
concentration/other thinking skills

Adults Over 60:

- Loss of bladder control
- Frequent urge to urinate
- Memory loss
- Progressive loss of other
thinking/reasoning skills
- Poor coordination/balance
- Difficulty walking (often described
as a shuffling gait or the feeling of
the feet being stuck)

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