

Surgical treatment for Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus (NPH)

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Hippocrates (5th century B.C.), the father of medicine, has been the first physician who document the treatment of hydrocephalus in his opera “De Morbis”.

The development that ushered in the modern era of hydrocephalus surgery was the introduction of valve-regulated shunts and biocompatible synthetic materials in 1952. Actually there are two kind of treatment for Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus (NPH) : the shunt surgery and the endoscopic third ventriculostomy (ETVS). The first one is the best treatment for the NPH, in fact the ETVS has a low rate of success.

Among the different configurations of shunt the most commons configurations are ventriculoperitoneal (VP) and ventriculoatrial (VA) shunts. The rate of complications have been reduced by using antibiotic-impregnated shunt system and programmable valves. The use of infusion test is also very helpful to control the right functioning of the system in vivo.

Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus patients may benefit from shunting over the long term. Shunt-related mortality is negligibile.