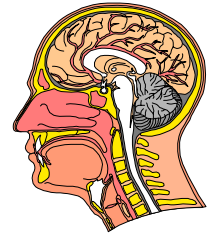


SHUNTS



DEFINITION:

Shunting is a surgical procedure that involves inserting a tube into the ventricles. This tube has a one-way valve that lets cerebrospinal fluid flow out of the brain and into another tube that is threaded just under the skin down to the abdomen where fluid is reabsorbed in membranes of surrounding internal organs.

The only visible evidence of a shunt is a small scar behind the ear.

A shunt is necessary for those individuals who have hydrocephalus. Hydrocephalus is most commonly seen in children with spina bifida.

Hydrocephalus is increased cerebrospinal fluid in the ventricles of the brain. Increased cerebrospinal fluid causes intracranial pressure and increased head circumference.

Shunts need to be replaced when they become clogged or malfunction.

COMMON SYMPTOMS OF SHUNT PROBLEMS:

- Vomiting
- Seizures
- Lethargy
- Irritability
- Swelling
- Redness along the shunt tract
- Change in personality or school performance
- Dilated pupils
- Headaches

ACTIVITY RESTRICTIONS AND MODIFICATIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH SHUNTS:

- Avoid trauma to the head.
- Heading a soccer ball
- Boxing

- Headstands
- Forward/backward rolls
- Discourage rebounding in basketball.
- Keep passes under control. Make sure the student is ready to catch the ball.
- Use a lighter ball (i.e., beach ball, balloon) when playing volleyball, so the student can play in any position.
- Avoid throwing at runners between bases in games such as kickball, softball, and baseball.

Information on this sheet contains only suggested guidelines. Each student must be considered individually, and in many cases, a physician's written consent should be obtained.