

Multiple Sclerosis Trust

information, education, research and support

MS Trust comments on CCSVI research

25 November 2009

CCSVI research is being widely reported in the media at present.

Chronic cerebro-spinal venous insufficiency (CCSVI) is a theory developed by Paolo Zamboni, a vascular surgeon at the University of Ferrara in Italy. His theory is that stenosis (an abnormal narrowing or obstruction) in blood vessels that take blood from the brain allows a build up of iron. This is then able to cross the blood-brain barrier and cause inflammation and damage to cells in the central nervous system.

In the 2 small studies of 116 people so far published, Dr Zamboni reports that the abnormality is present in people with MS but not in a healthy control group or in people with other neurological conditions. Surgery can relieve the blockage and appears to reduce MS symptoms.

Dr Mark Freedman is director of the MS research unit at The Ottawa Hospital, Canada and a keynote speaker at the recent MS Trust annual conference. He was questioned about the new theory during an education session hosted by the MS Society of Ottawa on Tuesday night (24 Nov). He was sceptical about the "liberation procedure" which he felt was based on circumstantial clinical evidence and cautioned that people with MS should not rush into getting it.

Pam Macfarlane, Chief Executive of the MS Trust said, "The cause of MS remains unknown and we welcome any work that may shed light on this. Dr Zamboni's theory will need further investigation in larger groups before any firm conclusions can be drawn"

[Further information on CCSVI](#)
[Report of Ottawa meeting](#)

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Page last modified on 12 March 2010.

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