

CTV.ca News Staff

Date: Mon. Mar. 14 2011 12:29 AM ET

A controversial treatment for multiple sclerosis will come under international scrutiny at a conference in Italy this week. Among the researchers intrigued by the treatment and decided to test it on his son.

Neurologist Dr. David Hubbard was drawn into the controversial Zamboni treatment after his son Devin, 27, developed MS.

"I wasn't going to sit on my hands and watch him end up in a wheelchair," Hubbard says.

Hubbard, who lives and works in San Diego, Calif., attended a meeting in Hamilton, Ont., last year, where scientists discussed the theory that had sluggish blood draining from their brains.

Zamboni believes that the culprit is blocked veins, and his treatment involves re-opening the blocked blood vessels.

Hubbard was skeptical, but launched a study to measure blood flow in MS patients. In his preliminary study, which has not yet been scrutinized, it indeed seems to have some sluggish blood drainage from their brains. The blood is lingering and taking longer to get out again, he says.

His patients include some Canadians who have travelled to California to participate in the study. The results: when they are treated for blood flow, they seem to have some improvement.

The data still have to be reviewed by independent scientists.

*With a report from CTV's medical specialist Avis Favaro*