



Information for You from Your Health Care Team

Words Used in Neurosurgery

Aneurysm (an-*yuhr-is-* m) The wall of an artery has a bulge or weak spot in it.

Angioplasty (an jee-*o-* plas-tee) When a balloon is used to open a blocked or narrowed artery.

Arachnoid matter (*uh-rak-noid -matt-er*) One of 3 membranes that cover the brain and spinal cord.

Arteriovenous malformation (AVM) (ahr-*ter-ee-oh-vee-nuhs mal-for-mey-shun,*) An abnormal tangle of blood vessels in the brain that develops during fetal growth or soon after birth. AVM can cause pressure to build up in the blood vessel and prevent normal blood flow.

Arteriosclerosis (ahr-*ter-ee-oh-skluh-roh-sis*)

Fat build up that forms deposits on the inside walls of blood vessels. Overtime this buildup can cause a narrowing or total blockage of the blood flow in the vessel.

Cerebral Angiography (suh-*ree -bruhl- an-jee-og-ruh-fee*)

A procedure where an x-ray visible dye is injected into the blood vessels of the brain so the doctor can see the blood vessels.

Cerebrospinal fluid (*sub-ree-broh-spi -nl -floo-id*)

Clear fluid that cushions the brain and spinal cord.

Computerized Tomography (*kuh m-pyoo-tuh-rihyz toh-mah-gra-fe*) (**CT Scan**)

A computer that uses x-rays to create a 3-dimensional picture of the inside of the body.

Hematoma (hee-*ma-toh-muh*) A collection of blood, usually clotted, found within the tissues or organs of the body.

Hemorrhage (hem-*er-ij*) When blood leaks from the blood vessels into the tissues or organs of the body.

Hydrocephalus (hi-*druh-sef-uh-luhs*)

An increase in the amount of cerebral spinal fluid that is unable to drain properly causing the brain to swell.

Intracranial Hypertension (in-*truh-krey-nee-ul hy-per-ten-shun*) An increase in the brain's blood pressure.

Ischemia (*i-skee-mee-uh*) When an area of the brain does not have enough blood supply. This can be caused by blocked blood vessels and may cause the tissues in this area to die.

Ischemic (*i- skee-mik*) The word is used to describe an area where the tissues have died.

Lumbar Puncture (*luhm-bar- punk-cher*) A test that may be used to look for problems in your brain, spinal cord, and related structures. It is sometimes called a spinal tap.

Papaverine (*puh-pav-uh-reen*) A drug that is used to relax the blood vessels during vasospasm.

Subarachnoid (*suhb-uk-rak-noid*) The space found under the arachnoid mater.

Subarachnoid Hemorrhage (*sub-hu-rak-noid hem-er-ij*) Bleeding in the space around the brain.

Transcranial Doppler (*trans-kray-nee-uhl dop-ler*) A machine that uses ultrasound to measure blood flow through arteries in the brain.

Vasospasm (*vas-oh-spaz-uhm*) A narrowing of an artery that supplies blood to your heart, brain or other organs. Vasospasm can occur in all parts at the same time or in a specific area.

Ventricle (*ven-trih-kul*) There are four ventricles in the brain. These ventricles produce cerebrospinal fluid which help the brain communicate and this fluid also protects the brain and spinal canal.

Ventricular Drain (*ven-trik-yuh-ler*) A tube that is placed in an area of the ventricle that helps cerebrospinal fluid that has the collected to drain.

Speak Up if You Have Questions or Concerns