Chronic cerebrospinal venous insufficiency

The initial peer-review publications by Zamboni and colleagues described cerebral venous circulatory patterns in patients with multiple sclerosis (MS) that were distinct from those observed in a population without neurologic disease\(^1\) and concluded that interventions to modify these could provide a potential therapy for the disease development and/or its associated symptoms.\(^2\) These publications concerning what is referred to as chronic cerebrospinal venous insufficiency (CCSVI) stimulated a wide array of responses, additional claims, and opinions from individuals within the medical/scientific community, MS patients, and medical reporters that received extensive publicity via the electronic and/or lay media. The *Annals of Neurology* has recently published the report of a task force summarizing current observations on this topic including cautioning about undertaking interventions of the cerebral vasculature, particularly in view of reported morbidity/mortality associated with such interventions (also described by Khan et al.\(^3\)). The overall interest in the subject resulted in the National Multiple Sclerosis Society (NMSS)/American Academy of Neurology (AAN) presenting a media directed update at the April 2010 AAN meeting and a discussion piece in the May issue of *Lancet Neurology*\(^4\).

As editors of a journal specifically devoted to MS, we actively seek to present timely information on any topic that brings insights into the mechanisms underlying the disease pathogenesis and opens up approaches to therapy. Our primary approach is to present original data that have stood up to the peer-review process we use for all of our original contributions. Our journal also has invited editorials, commentaries, and reviews on select MS related topics including controversies in the field.

In the current issue of our journal, we provide a commentary related to CCSVI prepared by interventional neuroradiologists from the Montreal Neurologic Institute who have been called upon to address this issue from demands coming from MS physicians and patients. They present the issues from the perspective of experts in cerebral vascular anatomy, physiology, and pathology. We are well aware of ongoing studies related to evaluation of the cerebral venous vasculature in MS including those supported by competitive research grants awarded by the organized MS Societies and of continued therapeutic interventions conducted under non-controlled conditions. This commentary was invited to provide insights and outline challenges that may contribute to progress in this field.

**References**


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