Cavernous Malformation

Cavernous malformation is a rare disorder. It involves the capillaries and smallest veins in one part of the brain. It is known by many different names. These include:

- Cavernomas.
- Cavernous angioma.
- *Congenital* (present since birth) vascular cavernous malformations.
- Familial hemangioma.
- Nevus cavernosus.
- Vascular erectile tumor.

CAUSES

Cavernous malformation is often inherited. The disorder happens when a blood-filled mass forms. This mass resembles a tumor. It is called a hemangioma.

SYMPTOMS

Problems (*symptoms*) include:

- Headaches.
- Convulsions (*seizures*).

TREATMENT

Treatment for cavernous malformation is:

- Symptomatic.
- Supportive.

It depends upon the symptoms that the patient experiences.

Surgery may be performed if the malformation:

- Is easy to reach.
- Is causing seizures or bleeding in the brain.

Surgical procedures may be considered too risky for some elderly patients.
This disorder is not always life-threatening. Often it does not require any specific treatment. After surgery, patients generally improve. Some improve quite significantly.

RESEARCH BEING DONE

The NINDS stands for the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke. It supports research on disorders of the central nervous system. This includes cavernous malformation. One of the goals of this research is to increase scientific understanding of these disorders. Another is to find ways to prevent, treat, and, ultimately, cure them.

Research is continually being done to learn more about this problem.

Information provided by The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke.

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