

NORMAL PRESSURE HYDROCEPHALUS (NPH)

FACTS

- Excess spinal fluid collects in the chambers of the brain (ventricles).
- The ventricles increase in size and press on nearby brain tissue, causing symptoms.

SYMPTOMS

- Difficulty walking (feet appear to be “glued” to the floor)
- Falls, usually backwards
- Loss of bladder control, which usually follows cognitive and walking difficulties

RISK FACTORS

- Typically diagnosed in people in their 60s and 70s
- Unknown cause but can be seen with history of brain bleed, infection, inflammation, or injury

DIAGNOSIS

- Brain scans and imaging can help see whether there is too much fluid building up in the ventricles.
- A lumbar puncture, also called a spinal tap, is sometimes recommended for diagnosis and treatment.

TREATMENT

- Insertion of a brain shunt by a neurosurgeon to remove extra fluid and improve symptoms.