



Information for You from Your Health Care Team

What is a brain aneurysm (an-yer-ism)?

A brain aneurysm is a weak spot on a blood vessel wall in the brain. These weak spots can leak or burst under increased pressure. There are different types of aneurysms:

Saccular



*Courtesy of
The Brain Aneurysm Foundation

Berry or saccular aneurysm

- A berry aneurysm is the most common type. It is also called a saccular aneurysm. It appears where two arteries meet. It looks like a berry, with a neck or stem.

Fusiform



*Courtesy of
The Brain Aneurysm Foundation

Giant or fusiform aneurysm

- A giant or fusiform aneurysm is an outpouching of the wall. It is irregularly shaped. It rarely ruptures.

What causes a brain aneurysm?

There is no exact cause. There are some risk factors that may increase your chance of developing an aneurysm. These factors include:

- High blood pressure
- Smoking
- Use of alcohol
- Use of cocaine
- Diabetes
- Connective tissue disease
- Pregnancy

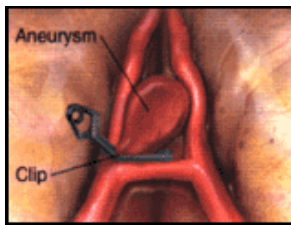
What symptoms will I have?

Your symptoms and treatment will depend if the aneurysm has ruptured. If your aneurysm has ruptured, it is called a subarachnoid hemorrhage (sub-a-rak-noyd hem-oh-rij). The goal of this treatment will be to stop the bleeding and decrease the amount of brain damage.

If your aneurysm has not ruptured, you may have no symptoms at all. In fact, most people do not have any symptoms. Some people have headaches but this does not mean you have an aneurysm. It is important to talk with your doctor to determine if this is the cause of your headache. The goal of this treatment will be to stop the aneurysm from rupturing.

What are the treatment options for a brain aneurysm?

The treatment will depend on the type, size and location of the aneurysm. It is very important to discuss with your doctor the treatment that will work best for you. Some options are described below:



Clipping

- A clip is placed around the neck of a berry type aneurysm. This surgery means opening the skull bone and moving the brain to see the aneurysm and placing the clip.



Coiling

- This is also known as the Guglielmi detachable coil, or GDC (named after the man who created the coil). This coil looks like a small spring that is placed in the aneurysm to stop the blood from flowing into the aneurysm.

*Pictures are courtesy of
The Brain Aneurysm Foundation

It is important to remember that you can live a long, productive life despite having a brain aneurysm. Please ask your doctors, nurses and other members of your health care team all of your questions. This will allow you to make the best choice for yourself or your loved one.

Where can I get more information on brain aneurysms?

The Brain Aneurysm Foundation has a very good website with a lot of information. Ask your nurse to print the information on this website or visit <http://www.bafound.org/>

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