

**Working to relieve the pressure!**

**What is Venous Sinus Stenting?**

Large veins, called Dural Venous Sinuses, are found within the skull and can become narrowed, a condition referred to as stenosis by clinicians. While stenosis slows down the flow of blood, stenting opens up the narrowing in the venous sinus to allow blood to flow through, in turn reducing the build-up of pressure inside the head. It is thought that some people are born with narrow veins whilst, for others, veins can narrow due to excess cerebral spinal fluid pressure.

**What is a Stent?**

A stent is small tube made of wire mesh which is inserted into the Venous Sinus and can be expanded across any narrowed part, thereby holding it open. Stents are typically made from a metal called Nitinol (Nickel Titanium alloy) and are relatively small in size, with a diameter ranging from 2½-4½ mm (about 1/5 of an inch) and a length of 10–20 mm (about 3/4 of an inch).

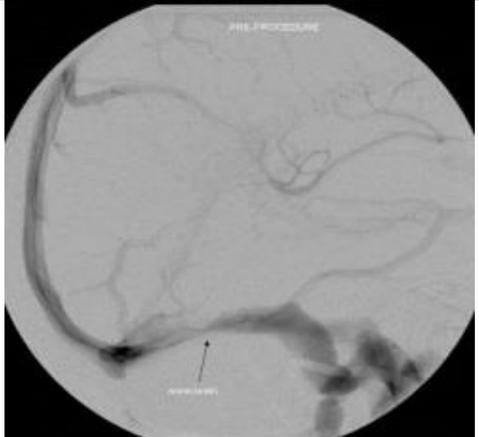


**What tests are needed before the procedure?**

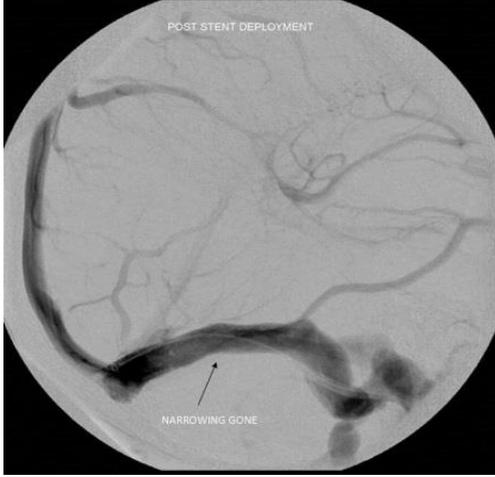
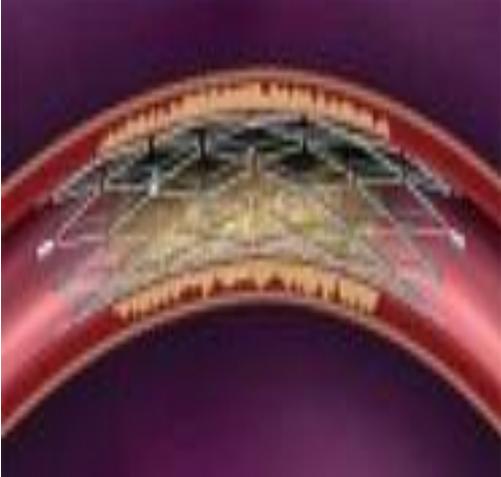
A Magnetic Resonance Venography (MRV) or Computer Tomography Venography (CTV) are both used to check for any narrowing of the Venous Sinus. If these scans suggest a narrowing, the next test is called a Retrograde Venography, a procedure which involves putting a small tube into the vein at the top of the leg and passing it up through the blood vessels to the head. A special dye is then injected and an X-ray taken which will confirm any suggested narrowing. The tube will then be used to take pressure measurements on both sides of the narrowing to confirm that the blood flow is compromised. You are usually awake for this procedure although a light sedative can be given if required. Some people experience a little discomfort at the back of the head during this procedure.

**What happens during the stenting procedure?**

You will be given a general anaesthetic and, like before, a small tube will be placed into the vein at the top of the leg and passed up through the blood vessels to the head.

<p>The narrowing is located</p>	<p>A stent is then passed up through the tube and placed within the narrowing</p>
	

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The stent is then deployed, allowing the blood to flow freely once more	Stent expands to open up the narrowing venous sinus
	

### What can I expect after the procedure?

Some people complain of a different type of headache on the side the stent was placed however this usually improves after a few weeks. Occasionally, there may be some hearing loss but this is usually temporary and should return to normal within a short space of time. Blood thinning drugs are taken for three months after the procedure to prevent blood clots from forming inside the stent. Your doctor will explain what medication is being prescribed, any risks associated with taking these drugs and the risks of the Venous Sinus stenting medical procedure itself, which can include:

Bleeding from inside the veins in the head.

The stent becoming blocked by a blood clot.

Those involved with having a general anaesthetic.

An occasional further narrowing on either side of the stent. In this case, further stent surgery is usually required.

(Photographic images are used with the kind permission of Jonathan O'Donnell)