

Attn: Canadians

This is a call to action.

My husband, like thousands of others in Canada and across the world was diagnosed with MS. He has been living with this diagnosis for 4 years now. He lives in pain and fear of what the next day will bring.

In November of 2009, Dr. Paolo Zamboni made an earth shattering discovery that is still being investigated and validated by the medical community. He discovered that the majority of people with clinical MS have abnormalities in the veins that drain blood from the brain which he theorizes could be responsible for high iron deposits in the brain tissue--potentially and likely the trigger for the inflammation and immune attacks that characterize MS. Dr. Zamboni has gone public with his findings and also with a treatment/procedure to unblock the veins "the Liberation" treatment.

In the meantime, those with MS have waited for politicians and the medical community to make decisions that potentially could change their lives. My husband, has been screened and, like so many others, has the abnormality that has been labeled CCSVI. He has been to see a vascular surgeon here in Ontario, who, although sympathetic, had to advise that he is currently unable to perform the corrective surgery owing to adverse pressure from the MS Society, the medical community, and political community. The results of the screening are compelling enough to have these blockages removed period as the damage that happens when these blockages are not removed is documented. Regardless of the cause or if it is a cure, CCSVI is a medical condition that must be treated. The fact is that if my husband didn't have MS he would be treated!

Individual doctors have been doing their own testing and getting training from Dr. Zamboni at their own expense because they care and are excited by the possibilities that are opening up with this line of investigation. My husband cannot wait for 6000 people to be tested! He HAS the condition now and it needs to be treated today! Every day increases the damage that potentially can never be reversed. We have a life and we deserve to live it to the fullest--this is my husband, but it is also your sister, your cousin, your mother, the woman you sat next to on the bus this morning. So many people deserve to have the right to choose treatment--especially if one presents itself that does not involve needles, infusions and drugs.

My concern is that, especially in Canada, a basic right is being violated. The right to decide on a course of treatment and action should belong to the person who has the condition. Currently, the treatments for MS are for the most part invasive, of questionable merit, and carry very weighty and in some cases deadly side effects. Why is the Liberation treatment held up to such scrutiny? Why can those who have MS not decide for themselves what course of treatment to follow? And why would a diagnosis of MS alter a vascular surgeon's right and obligation to treat a condition when presented?

We are lead to believe that we live in a democracy. Based on the experiences of my husband, I would argue that we are not.

We need to speak as one voice and demand that our rights be upheld by those who are sworn to always act in our best interests.

Demand the right of the patients to access screening and subsequent treatment for CCSVI now and today.

Heidi Ivany