Cerebral Cavernous Angioma Fast Facts

1. **Cerebral Cavernous Angioma** is also known as cerebral cavernous malformation (CCM) or cavernoma.

2. A cavernous angioma is a **mulberry-shaped abnormal blood vessel with thin, leaky walls**.

3. Cavernous angiomas are found mostly in the **brain and spinal cord**.

4. **1 in 500 people** have at least one cavernous angioma in their brain. Most people will have no symptoms.

5. Cavernous angiomas can grow and **hemorrhage at any age**, including in young children. They are most likely to become symptomatic when a person is between the ages of **20-40**.

6. The most common first symptom is **seizure** (50%), followed by hemorrhage (25%) and **neurological deficits** (25%) like blurred vision and weakness in limbs.

7. Cavernous angioma is **hereditary in about 25%** of people who have the illness.

8. Those with the hereditary form of the illness will have **more than one** cavernous angioma and will **develop more lesions** over time.

9. The hereditary form of the illness does not skip generations. Each child of an affected person has a **50/50 chance** of inheriting the illness.

10. The hereditary form of the illness can be caused by a mutation on any one of three genes: CCM1, CCM2, and CCM3.

11. The hereditary form of the illness can happen in any family. However, there are several groups of people that are at higher risk for the hereditary form: descendants of the original Hispanic population of New Mexico where the mutation began in the mid-1600’s, the Ashkenazi Jewish population, and a European-American group with roots in the **deep South and Oklahoma**.

12. **Brain or spinal surgery** is the only current treatment for the illness, but there are a number of **medications under development** to strengthen the vessels and stop more cavernous angiomas from forming.