

State of Vermont
Executive Department
A Proclamation

WHEREAS, Chiari malformations are structural defects in the cerebellum, the part of the brain that controls balance; and

WHEREAS, Chiari malformations may develop when the part of the intracranial cavity is smaller than normal, causing the cerebellum and brain stem to be pushed downward into the foramen magnum and into the upper spinal canal. The resulting pressure on the cerebellum and brain stem may affect functions controlled by these areas and block the flow of cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) — the clear liquid that surrounds and cushions the brain and spinal cord — to and from the brain; and

WHEREAS, in the past, it was estimated that the condition occurs in about one in every 1,000 births. However, the increased use of diagnostic imaging has shown that Chiari malformation may be much more common. Complicating this estimation is the fact that some children who are born with the condition may not show symptoms until adolescence or adulthood, if at all; and

WHEREAS, individuals with Chiari malformations may experience neck pain, balance problems, muscle weakness, numbness or other abnormal feelings in the arms or legs, dizziness, vision problems, difficulty swallowing, ringing or buzzing in the ears, hearing loss, vomiting, insomnia, depression, or headache made worse by coughing or straining. Hand coordination and fine motor skills may be affected. Symptoms may change for some individuals, depending on the buildup of CSF and resulting pressure on the tissues and nerves; and

WHEREAS, surgery is the only treatment available to correct functional disturbances or halt the progression of damage to the central nervous system; and

WHEREAS, within the Federal government, the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS), a component of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), supports and conducts research on brain and nervous system disorders, including Chiari malformations;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Peter Shumlin, Governor, do hereby proclaim September 2016 as

CHIARI MALFORMATION AWARENESS MONTH
in Vermont.



Given under my hand and the Great Seal of the State of Vermont on this 7th day of July, A.D. 2016.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized initial 'P' followed by a long horizontal line.

Peter Shumlin
Governor