



# CONQUER CHIARI WITH EVERY STEP<sup>®</sup>

## Key Three:

### There Are Two Options, Take Control Or Be Controlled

*The following is an excerpt from Conquer Chiari: A Patient's Guide. It focuses on the third of three key concepts when confronting the reality of Chiari, there are two options, take control or be controlled.*

#### **"I feel like Chiari has taken over my life."**

When confronting the Chiari reality — lack of knowledge and awareness, feeling isolated, physical and mental strain of symptoms — patients are really faced with two choices. They can either let Chiari take control of them, go with the flow of the medical system, and place their entire trust in their doctors; or they can take control, educate themselves and those around them, and make informed, intelligent decisions.

While I strongly favor the take control option, I am not judging those who choose not to do this. Some people would prefer not to make their own choices and find sifting through the information more disturbing than anything. That's fine, but for others, those in the take control camp, this book can be your starting point.

I believe that educating yourself offers a number of benefits, both external and internal. Externally, an educated patient is able to find a doctor appropriate for their situation, bring critical items to the attention of their medical team, and solicit support from others by being able to explain what is happening. After treatment, an educated patient is also better equipped to deal with any residual symptoms or chronic issues. Research has shown that patient education improves outcomes when dealing with chronic diseases, and I suspect Chiari is no different.

Internally, many Chiari patients report feeling depressed, anxious, and overwhelmed. Being proactive and taking back some measure of control can provide a mental and emotional boost. Keeping the mind busy prevents thinking about negative thoughts, and some people even find themselves transformed in a positive way by their experience.

As I talked about earlier, everyone's Chiari experience is unique and no one should judge how someone handles a situation like this. But if you want to arm yourself with knowledge, take control of your own path, and fight back, then I hope you find what you need in this book.



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