



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY HEALTH SCIENCES

ISSN: 2394 9406

STRESS FACTORS IN MIGRAINE IN FEMALES

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Abstract:

Migraine is a widespread and debilitating neurological disorder that has been recognized since antiquity. The World Health Organization has listed migraine as a significant public health concern and major cause of years of life with disability. It is a periodic disorder that comprises paroxysmal and blinding hemicranial pain, nausea/vomiting, photophobia and phonophobia. Stress is often linked to the occurrence of migraine headaches

Keywords: Headache, migraine, migraine triggers

OVERVIEW:

A migraine is a headache that can cause severe throbbing pain or a pulsing sensation, usually on one side of the head. It's often accompanied by nausea, vomiting, and extreme sensitivity to light and sound. Migraine attacks can last for hours to days, and the pain can be so severe that it interferes with your daily activities.¹

For some people, a warning symptom known as an aura occurs before or with the headache. An aura can include visual disturbances, such as flashes of light or blind spots, or other disturbances, such as tingling on one side of the face or in an arm or leg and difficulty speaking²

Migraine triggers –

There are a number of migraine triggers, including:

- **Hormonal changes in women.** Fluctuations in estrogen, such as before or during menstrual periods, pregnancy and menopause, seem to trigger headaches in many women.

Hormonal medications, such as oral contraceptives, also can worsen migraines. Some women, however, find that their migraines occur less often when taking these medications.

- **Drinks.** These include alcohol, especially wine, and too much caffeine, such as coffee.

- **Stress.** Stress at work or home can cause migraines.
- **Sensory stimuli.** Bright or flashing lights can induce migraines, as can loud sounds. Strong smells — such as perfume, paint thinner, secondhand smoke and others — trigger migraines in some people.
- **Sleep changes.** Missing sleep or getting too much sleep can trigger migraines in some people.
- **Physical factors.** Intense physical exertion, including sexual activity, might provoke migraines.
- **Weather changes.** A change of weather or barometric pressure can prompt a migraine.
- **Medications.** Oral contraceptives and vasodilators, such as nitroglycerin, can aggravate migraines.
- **Foods.** Aged cheeses and salty and processed foods might trigger migraines. So might skipping meals.
- **Food additives.** These include the sweetener aspartame and the preservative monosodium glutamate (MSG), found in many foods.³

Migraine, a common disabling disease, accounts for a large proportion of non-fatal disease related burden worldwide. In a review study on global burden of disease in 2013, migraine and mild-to-moderate mental disorders such as depressive and anxiety disorders were main causes of burden in this category for the Korean public. Migraine has several comorbidities and modifiable risk factors. In published literature, vascular accidents, depression, anxiety, epilepsy, and sleep problems are

commonly associated with migraine. Attack frequency, caffeine, medication overuse, obesity, snoring or sleep apnea, psychiatric comorbidity, and stressful life events have been suggested as modifiable risk factors for migraine complications such as vascular events and chronic migraine⁴

Migraine is a type of primary headache which can be caused and/or aggravated by factors like psychological stress and poor sleep quality. We tried to determine the prevalence of migraine in young Saudi females, and to identify if a relationship exists between psychological stress or poor sleep quality and migraine. This study was conducted on 1,990 young female university students (17- to 26-years-old). The results of the study showed that 5.17% participants had migraine. Migraineurs had significantly higher average stress scores; felt more tired, nervous, restless, could not sit still, felt that everything was an effort, and nothing cheered them up. Moreover, presence of migraine showed a strong positive relationship with various stress parameters including "High stress scores", "being tired", "being nervous", "restlessness", "inability to sit still" and feeling that everything was an effort. These results show that psychological stress may be a strong factor responsible for causing migraine.⁵

CONCLUSION:

Stress is viewed as a transactional process between an individual and his or her environment in which the individual makes a response to an internal or external constraint. It is trigger for migraine attacks, and is present in approximately 70% of individuals. High levels of stress are reported in migraine patients, particularly in those suffering from chronic daily migraine

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

We are grateful to Hon'ble Trustees of PIMS, Islampur, for supporting us. We are

thankful to the departmental staff for cooperation in completion of our work.

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