

EHF News 23

Menstrual migraine in a representative Dutch population sample

In a study recently performed in the Netherlands by Martin Bomhof (MD), Arie Knuistingh Neven (MD) and me, our intention was to assess the prevalence of menstrual migraine and its restrictions in daily activities in a representative Dutch population sample. The results of this study will be published in more detail shortly.

Almost 2000 Dutch women, aged 13-55 years were included. More than half of the women with regular menstrual cycle suffers from menstrual complaints. A substantial proportion reports headache or migraine as a frequent problem. Use of oral contraceptives seems to reduce the occurrence of menstrual complaints in general, but not the occurrence of headache and migraine in particular.

The measured prevalence of menstrual migraine (3%) is lower than in the literature (4-73%), most probably because we did not use a selected group of patients but a population-based sample of ordinary women.

Extrapolated, 310,000 women in Holland suffer with menstrually-related-migraine every month or are losing every month 3 days or every year a month due to their menstrual migraine.

Our survey confirmed that attacks of migraine in relation to menstruation are more severe, of longer duration, and more resistant to treatment than migraine attacks at other times of the month.

Lack of awareness results in underdiagnosis and undertreatment. There is strong need for greater patient and professional education about menstrual migraine and the best ways to manage the disorder.

Emile Couturier (Amsterdam)

Migraine Action in United Kingdom

The Migraine Action Association (formerly the British Migraine Association) is a registered charity with over 17,000 members. They bridge the gap between the migraine sufferer and the medical world by providing information on all aspects of the condition and its management. The association is committed to raising general awareness of the condition and they are a recognised source of information; the leaflets and newsletters are distributed to clinics, hospitals, libraries, doctors' surgeries and the media throughout the country.

The Association has 3 main aims:

To provide information and friendly, positive reassurance, understanding and encouragement to migraine sufferers and their families

To encourage and support research and investigation into migraine, its causes, diagnosis, prevention and treatment

To gather and pass on information about treatments available for the control and relief of migraine and to facilitate an exchange of information on the subject.

The group offer a telephone helpline, a quarterly newsletter and numerous leaflets on all aspects of migraine. Members participate in research and product trials and also collect and donate considerable sums of money to support migraine clinics and further research.

The Association is funded entirely by donations and members' subscriptions.

The Association was the first lay organisation for migraine patients and has become a model for many others which have since been formed all over the world. The Association retains contact with 25+ lay headache organisations throughout the world and is now a member of the World Headache Alliance.
<http://www.migraine.org.uk/>

F. Antonaci (Pavia)