

Why Chronic Daily Headache is Rarely Migraine

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- By definition, a migraine is 4-72 hours in duration — untreated!
- so daily headache would mean 10+ migraines per month for month after month ???

Primary Headaches

- Migraine (19 categories)
- Tension-type headache (9)
- Trigeminal Autonomic Cephalagias (14)
- Other (15)

Why Chronic Daily Headache is Rarely Migraine

- Anti-migraine meds usually don't help chronic daily headache... in fact:
 - "nothing works"
 - "it worked for a while... then wore off"
 - "I've tried everything"

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- Migraine only makes up <5% of all diagnoses

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Migraine 'only' makes up <5% of all diagnoses

- <https://ichd-3.org>
- Primary (57 categories, migraine is 'only' 15)
- Secondary (200+ categories)
- Neuropathies, Facial Pains... (37+ categories)

Primary Headaches

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If you only ask a few questions, everything sounds like migraine

- unilateral?
- “throbbing”?
- do you lie down when you get a headache?
- is it moderate to severe?
- do you get nausea with the headache?
- do you get light or noise sensitivity?
- does a triptan help?

What other questions are helpful ??

- “unilateral, throbbing, severe, nausea, worse with activity, light-sensitivity... triptan helps”
- ??

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- “unilateral, throbbing, severe, nausea, worse with activity, light-sensitivity... triptan helps”
- are you able to continue to be active?
- is it a dull, non-specific, frontal pain?

Tension-type Headache

- not worsened with physical activity
- bifrontal, pressure-like

What other questions are helpful ??

- “unilateral, throbbing, severe, nausea, worse with activity, light-sensitivity... triptan helps”
- ??

What's the diagnosis?

- "unilateral, pulsating, severe with nausea, light-sensitivity... triptan helps"
- didn't start until >30 y/o, or persists > 60 y/o

Secondary Headache

- They didn't start until after:
 - ____ was Rx (medication, supplement)
 - stroke, trauma, infection....
 - Toxin exposure (work, environment...)
- Worsened with position change
 - Low pressure / High pressure
- Health chang (Blood sugar, thyroid, ...)

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What's the diagnosis?

- “unilateral, pulsating, severe with nausea, light-sensitivity... triptan helps”
- Triptan helps — but 15–120 per month
- daily, or near-daily headache
- can't remember the last time they went a week without a headache

Medication-overuse headache

- The most common cause of near-daily headache in the US
- >15 days of tx/month
- Ask what they take for headache (incl. OTC)
- Ask how many days they take something in a month — not only the number (or mg) of pills

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- is it tender anywhere?

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- is it tender anywhere?
- is it 100% one-sided?

Occipital Neuralgia

- “unilateral, throbbing, severe, nausea, worse with activity, light-sensitivity... triptan helps”
- tender over the occipital nerve
- 100% one-sided
- Improved with occipital nerve block

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What other questions are helpful ??

- “unilateral, throbbing, severe, nausea, worse with activity, light-sensitivity... triptan helps”
- What time of day do you get a headache?

What other questions are helpful ??

- "unilateral, throbbing, severe, nausea, worse with activity, light-sensitivity... triptan helps"
- "It awakens me from sleep"

Hypnic Headache

- "unilateral, throbbing, severe, nausea, worse with activity, light-sensitivity... triptan helps"
- Develops only during sleep
- Commonly women over 50.... at 3am

Questions to Remember

- is there tenderness?
- are they 100% one-sided?
- are they not worsened by activity?
- did the HAs start after age 30?
- do you still have them after age 60?
- how many days do you take a pill for HA?

Questions to Remember

- Where is Northwest Neurological?
- Who works there?

Northwest Neurological



Northwest Neurological

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