

Study shows that exercise reduces migraine suffering

March 26 2009

While physical exercise has been shown to trigger migraine headaches among sufferers, a new study describes an exercise program that is well tolerated by patients. The findings show that the program decreased the frequency of headaches and improved quality of life. The study is published in *Headache: The Journal of Head and Face Pain*.

The study used a sample of [migraine](#) sufferers who were examined before, during and after an aerobic [exercise](#) intervention. The program was based on indoor cycling (for continuous aerobic exercise) and was designed to improve maximal oxygen uptake without worsening the patients' migraines.

After the treatment period, patients' maximum oxygen uptake increased significantly. There was no worsening of migraine status at any time during the study period and, during the last month of treatment, there was a significant decrease in the number of migraine attacks, the number of days with migraine per month, [headache](#) intensity and amount of headache medication used.

Individuals with headache and migraine typically are less physically active than those without headache. [Patients](#) with migraine often avoid exercise, resulting in less aerobic endurance and flexibility. Therefore, well designed studies of exercise in patients with migraine are imperative.

"While the optimal amount of exercise for patients with migraine

remains unknown, our evaluated program can now be tested further and compared to pharmacological and non-pharmacological treatments to see if exercise can prevent migraine," says Dr. Emma Varkey, co-author of the study.

Source: Wiley ([news](#) : [web](#))

Citation: Study shows that exercise reduces migraine suffering (2009, March 26) retrieved 10 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2009-03-migraine.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.