

Migraine sufferers who experienced childhood abuse have greater risk of cardiovascular disease

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Migraine sufferers who experienced abuse and neglect as children have a greater risk of cardiovascular (CV) disease including stroke and myocardial infarction (MI) among others, say scientists presenting data at the American Headache Society's 52nd Annual Scientific Meeting in Los Angeles this week.

In a multi-center, cross-sectional study of more than 1,300 headache clinic patients diagnosed with [migraine](#), investigators found a linear relationship between the risk of stroke, [transient ischemic attack](#) (TIA), MI, or all of these adverse outcomes and the total number of abuse types they experienced as children (physical, emotional or sexual abuse, or physical or emotional neglect.)

Patients in the study completed a self-administered electronic questionnaire which collected information on age, gender, race, highest educational level attained, [body mass index](#), smoking status, history of childhood maltreatment, as well as self-reported physician-diagnosed CV conditions and risk factors such as hypertension, diabetes, obesity, and obstructive sleep apnea. The [Childhood Trauma](#) Questionnaire was used to assess physical, sexual, emotional abuse and physical, emotional neglect.

"It is clear from this work that early adverse experiences influence a migraine sufferers' cardiovascular health in adulthood," said Gretchen E.

Tietjen, MD, of the University of Toledo College Of Medicine, who led the team from 11 neurology centers in the U.S. and Canada. "Other work has shown a link between childhood maltreatment and migraine and now we know that early abuse puts these adults at a greater risk of cardiovascular and cerebrovascular disease.

"Dr. Tietjen and her teams are pioneers in understanding the relationship between negative childhood experiences and migraine," said David Dodick, M.D., president of the AHS. "Now we need to drill even deeper to understand the relationship between migraine, aura status, childhood maltreatment and CV disease risk."

Provided by American Headache Society

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