

Stigma of migraine is significant; worse for those with chronic migraine

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Researchers looking for the first time at how migraine sufferers experience the stigmatizing effects of their disease show that chronic migraine sufferers experience worse stigma than episodic migraine sufferers and more than those with other neurological diseases including stroke, epilepsy and MS.

The research, presented at the American Headache Society's 52nd Annual Scientific Meeting in Los Angeles this week, was conducted at the Jefferson Headache Clinic at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital in Philadelphia by Jung E. Park, MD and her team.

"Many diseases like HIV, mental illness, and cancer can be highly stigmatizing, resulting in depression, anxiety, decreased quality of life, and disruption of [social relationships](#)," said Dr. Park. "Our goal was to understand how [stigma](#) attaches to migraine."

The team surveyed 123 outpatients with chronic migraine (CM) and 123 with episodic migraine (EM) ages 18 to 65 using the Stigma Scale for [Chronic Illness](#) (SSCI), a recently developed 24-item instrument that allows for the quantitative assessment of stigma in persons with neurological disorders and comparisons across disorders, the Migraine Disability Scale (MIDAS), and the SF-12, a quality of life measure.

"The SSCI was markedly different in EM vs. CM (41.6 ± 14.84 vs. 54.05 ± 20.15 , (p

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