

Migraine in children may affect school performance

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Children with migraine are more likely to have below average school performance than kids who do not have headaches, according to new research published in the October 30, 2012, print issue of *Neurology*, the medical journal of the American Academy of Neurology.

The study of 5,671 Brazilian children ages 5 to 12 found that those with migraine were 30 percent more likely to have below average [school performance](#) than those with no [headaches](#).

"Studies have looked at the burden of migraine for [adolescents](#), but less work has been done to determine the effect of migraine on younger children," said study author Marcelo E. Bigal, MD, PhD, of Merck & Co. in Whitehouse Station, New Jersey, and a member of the American Academy of Neurology.

For the study, the students' teachers provided information on students' performance that was the same information provided to educational boards. Teachers also completed a validated questionnaire screening for emotional and behavioral problems and interviewed parents with a questionnaire covering medical history, headaches and other information.

The study found that 0.6 percent of the children had chronic migraine, or migraine on 15 or more days per month, 9 percent had episodic migraine, and 17.6 percent had probable migraine, which meant they met all but one of the criteria for migraine and did not meet the full

criteria for any other type of headache syndrome.

The link between migraine and poor performance in school was even stronger for children with migraines that were more severe, lasted longer, or for children with chronic migraine, as well as for those who also had emotional or behavioral problems.

"With approximately one-fourth of school-age children having headaches with [migraine](#) features, this is a serious problem, especially for those with frequent, severe attacks that do not subside quickly," Bigal said. "Parents and teachers need to take these headaches seriously and make sure children get appropriate medical attention and treatment."

Provided by American Academy of Neurology

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