

Obesity may be associated with even occasional migraines

September 11 2013

People who get occasional migraines are more likely to be obese than people who do not have migraines, according to a study published in the September 11, 2013, online issue of *Neurology*.

"Previous studies have shown a link between people with chronic [migraine](#) and obesity, but the research has been conflicting on whether that link existed for those with less frequent attacks," said study author B. Lee Peterlin, DO, of Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore, MD. "As obesity is a risk factor that can potentially be modified and since some medications for migraine can lead to weight gain or loss, this is important information for people with migraine and their doctors."

For the study, 3,862 people with an average age of 47 filled out surveys with information on height, weight and migraines. A total of 1,044 participants were obese and 188 of the participants had occasional, or episodic, migraine, which is defined as 14 or fewer [migraine headaches](#) per month.

Obese people were 81 percent more likely to have episodic migraine (of any frequency) as compared to people of normal weight.

"These results suggest that doctors should promote healthy [lifestyle choices](#) for diet and exercise in people with episodic migraine," Peterlin said. "More research is needed to evaluate whether weight loss programs can be helpful in overweight and obese people with episodic migraine."

Peterlin said the results also indicate that the link between episodic migraine and obesity is stronger in those under the age of 50, the years when migraine is most prevalent, as compared to people older than 50.

Provided by American Academy of Neurology

Citation: Obesity may be associated with even occasional migraines (2013, September 11)
retrieved 25 April 2024 from
<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-09-obesity-occasional-migraines.html>

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