

Fact Sheet: Disability of Migraine

- 1 in 7 Americans will experience migraine this year ¹.
- Migraine is the 2nd leading cause of all global disability ².
- Active migraine attacks disable with impacts comparable to severe dementia or amputation of both legs ³.
- Migraine and headache disorders often disable *without* headache (e.g. heightened sensation, vertigo, nausea/vomiting, cognitive symptoms).
- 35% of people with migraine experience ≥ 4 headache days per month.
6% of people with migraine experience ≥ 15 headache days per month (i.e. chronic migraine) ⁴.
- Among all adults with migraine, 10% score as “*very severe disability*” by the Migraine Disability Assessment Scale (MIDAS) ⁴.
- Among adults with chronic migraine, 63% score as “*very severe disability*” by MIDAS; 83% report moderate to severe pain more than half of the time ⁴.
- 10% of Americans with episodic migraine (i.e. ≤ 14 headache days per month) and 20% of Americans with chronic migraine self-report being “*occupationally disabled*” ⁵.
- Just 37% of Americans with chronic migraine are employed full-time ⁶.
- Americans with chronic migraine who do work, lose 14% of annual productivity ⁶.
- Among workers with chronic migraine, 18% are absent on sick leave at any given time; 20% are absent on sick leave ≥ 8 weeks per year ^{6, 7}.
- Among all workers with migraine, 77% of lost work productivity is due to “*presenteeism*” ⁸.
- Only 22% of UK employers say migraine is “*a serious enough reason to be absent from work*” ⁹.
- Socioeconomic status decreases as migraine prevalence increases ¹⁰.



Alliance for
Headache
Disorders
Advocacy

Alliance for Patient Access
American Academy of Neurology
American Headache Society
Clusterbusters
Cluster Headache Support Group
Headache Cooperative of New England

Headache Cooperative of the Pacific
Migraine Research Foundation
Miles for Migraine Races
National Headache Foundation
Runnin' for Research
Southern Headache Society

Citations:

- 1 Global Burden of Disease study, 2016, <http://ihmeuw.org/43cn>
- 2 GBD 2016. Global, regional, and national incidence, prevalence, and years lived with disability for 328 diseases and injuries for 195 countries, 1990-2016: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2016. *Lancet* 2017;390:1211-59.
- 3 Salomon JA, et al. Disability weights for the Global Burden of Disease 2013 study. *Lancet Glob Health* 2015;3:e712–23.
- 4 Blumenfeld AM et al. Disability, HRQoL and resource use among chronic and episodic migraineurs: results from the International Burden of Migraine Study (IBMS). *Cephalalgia*. 2011;31:301-15.
- 5 Manack AN et al. Chronic migraine: epidemiology and disease burden. *Curr Pain Headache Rep* 2011;15:70-78.
- 6 Stewart WF et al.. Employment and work impact of chronic migraine and episodic migraine. *JOEM*. 2010;52:8-14.
- 7 Fiane et al. Sick leave is related to frequencies of migraine and non-migrainous headache—The HUNT Study. *Cephalalgia* 2006;26:960-7.
- 8 Stewart WF et al. Work impact of migraine headaches. *JOEM*. 2008;50:736-45.
- 9 <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/business/0/the-best-excuses-for-calling-in-sick-according-to-your-boss/>
- 10 Stewart WF et al., Migraine prevalence, socioeconomic status, and social causation. *Neurology*. 2013;81:948-55.