

NIH HEAL Initiative Must Focus on Headache Disorders to Reduce Disease Burden and Opioid Prescribing

- *The extraordinary burden of headache disorders.*

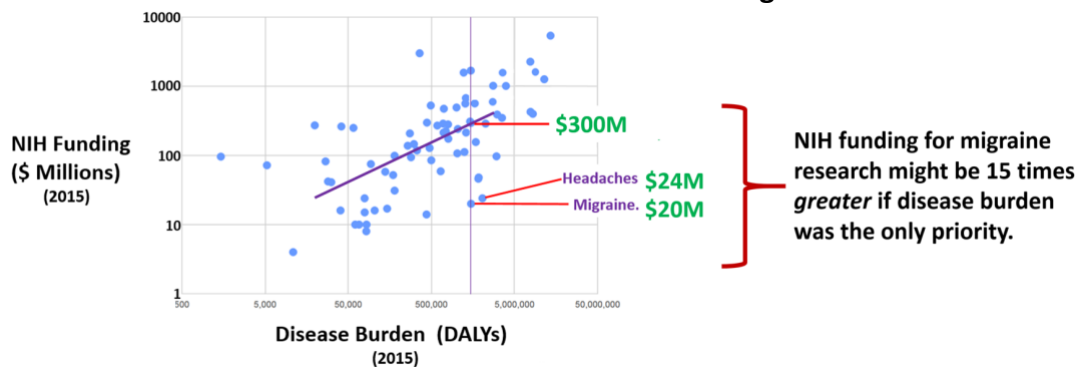
- Migraine is the 2nd leading cause of US disability ¹, and 60 million Americans have migraine ².
- Cluster headache is widely reputed to be the most severe pain that humans can experience³.

- *There is a critical need for more effective and safer treatments for headache disorders.*

- Opioid use can *worsen* migraine frequency and severity for some people ⁴.
- Evidence-based guidelines uniformly recommend *avoiding* opioids for headache disorders.
- Yet, 10% of Americans with migraine are active opioid users ⁵, and 59% receive opioids in US EDs ⁶.

- *NIH has neglected research on headache disorders.*

- Headache disorders are the *least* funded NIH research area among the *most* burdensome diseases ^{7,8}:



- NIH has failed to prioritize programs for headache disorders research...
- ...despite 17 Appropriations Report Language statements “strongly” urging NIH to do so since FY09 ⁹.

- *Furthermore, statutory authority for the HEAL Initiative [42 U.S. Code § 284q–1] calls for disease burden to be a “crucial consideration” in prioritizing these research programs.*

- Yet, < 1% of grants funded under HEAL have been for headache disorders research ¹⁰.

- **Request a \$50m line item for headache disorders research from FY22 HEAL appropriations.**

Please Co-Sign the Dear Colleague letter for FY2022 LHHS Appropriations

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Headache
Disorders
Advocacy**

Alliance for Patient Access
American Academy of Neurology
American Headache Society
CHAMP
Chronic Migraine Awareness
Clusterbusters
Cluster Headache Support Group

Headache Cooperative of New England
Headache Cooperative of the Pacific
Migraine Research Foundation
Miles for Migraine
National Headache Foundation
Southern Headache Society
Spinal CSF Leak Foundation

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Citations:

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