



ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Sociodemographic characteristics of a cohort of patients with chronic migraine from a health district in Asturias[☆]



C. García-Cabo Fernández*, P. Sánchez-Lozano, A. Pérez-Álvarez, J.M. Martínez-Ramos, L. Martínez-Rodríguez, J. Pascual

Área de Neurociencias, Hospital Universitario Central de Asturias e Ineuropa, Oviedo, Asturias

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Episodic migraine;
Occupational status;
Educational level

Abstract

Introduction: Chronic migraine (CM), with or without medication overuse, is a common condition in the general population. It has traditionally been assumed that suffering CM has an impact on a patient's socio-occupational and educational level. Our goal was to analyse these characteristics in a cohort of patients with CM and compare them to the general population.

Material and methods: We used a telephone interview and an ad hoc questionnaire to record and analyse the sociodemographic characteristics of 150 patients with a diagnosis of CM according to the criteria of the International Headache Classification. Results were compared to those obtained by the Third Health Survey of Asturias, conducted in 2012.

Results: Of the 150 patients, 142 were women (95%). Married patients accounted for 59.3% of the total interviewees, while 22% were single, 12.6% divorced, and 6% were widowed. Regarding educational level, we found that 73% of our patients had completed secondary or higher education and 25% had completed only primary education. Sixty per cent of these patients are occupationally active, while the rest are not actively employed. Overall, these figures do not differ from those published by the Third Health Survey of Asturias.

Discussion: The classic idea that CM has a negative impact on patients' educational, personal, and occupational situations was not confirmed in our series. In fact, most patients with CM reported a medium-high educational level and a good socio-occupational status. However, since our series includes only CM patients attended in a specialist clinic, our results are not necessarily applicable to all patients with CM.

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* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: C.garciacabo@gmail.com (C. García-Cabo Fernández).

PALABRAS CLAVE

Datos sociodemográficos; International classification of headache disorders-III beta; Migraña crónica; Migraña episódica; Situación laboral; Nivel educacional

Características sociodemográficas de una cohorte de pacientes con migraña crónica en un área sanitaria de Asturias

Resumen

Introducción: La migraña crónica (MC) con o sin abuso de fármacos es una patología frecuente en la población general. Tradicionalmente se ha asumido que presentarla conlleva un detrimento del nivel socio-laboral y educacional. Nuestro objetivo ha sido analizar descriptivamente estas características en una cohorte de pacientes con MC y compararlas con las de nuestra población. **Material y métodos:** Analizamos, mediante una entrevista telefónica y una encuesta diseñada ad hoc, las características sociodemográficas de 150 pacientes diagnosticados de MC en nuestra consulta de cefaleas según los criterios de la Clasificación Internacional de Cefaleas. Los resultados se compararon con los obtenidos en la III Encuesta de Salud de Asturias llevada a cabo en el año 2012.

Resultados: De los 150 pacientes, 142 (95%) eran mujeres. El 59,3% de los pacientes entrevistados estaban casados, 22% solteros, 12,6% divorciados y 6% eran viudos. Con respecto al nivel educacional encontramos que un 73% de nuestros pacientes habían cursado estudios secundarios o superiores frente a un 25% que habían cursado solo estudios primarios. Un 60% de los pacientes está activo laboralmente, mientras que el resto se encuentra inactivo. En global, estas cifras no difieren de las arrojadas por la III Encuesta de Salud de Asturias.

Discusión: La idea clásica de que la MC causa un deterioro en la situación laboral, personal y educacional de los pacientes que la presentan no se confirma en nuestra serie, en la que la mayoría de pacientes con MC tienen un nivel educacional medio-alto y una buena situación socio-laboral. Es posible que estos resultados se deban a que nuestra serie comprende solo a pacientes con MC que acuden a una consulta especializada y, por tanto, no sean necesariamente aplicables al global de pacientes con MC.

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Introduction

Chronic migraine (CM) is the most incapacitating type of migraine. The annual rate of progression to CM is estimated at 2.5%.¹ According to the criteria of the International Classification of Headache Disorders (ICHD-III β), CM is a type of headache presenting in patients with a history of migraine and no medication overuse and occurring on at least 15 days per month, for at least 3 months, with the features of migraine headache on at least 8 days per month.²

Although the aetiology of CM is unclear, certain risk factors are statistically associated with headache chronicity. Among those considered non-modifiable are such sociodemographic characteristics as sex, race, marital status, and education level.^{3,4} Considering these factors, the classic profile of a CM patient is a middle-aged woman with a low level of education.

Migraine pain may appear at early ages (even during childhood or adolescence), limiting patients' educational or professional development. Studying and analysing these factors is therefore of particular importance because of the socio-economic and personal impact that CM can have.^{3,4}

Following this line of thinking, we conducted a descriptive analysis of a cohort of patients with CM in a health district in Asturias.

Our study compares CM patients with the general Asturian population, of which 65% had not completed secondary education and over 20% were unemployed.

Patients and methods

Ad hoc telephone interviews allowed us to build a cohort of 150 patients who had previously been diagnosed with CM according to ICHD-III β criteria at the headache unit in the neurology department of the Hospital Universitario Central de Asturias.

The survey took place during the first half of 2014 and was carried out by third- and fourth-year neurology residents who had been trained at the headache unit. They systematically registered such patient data as marital status, education level, and occupational status. Our data was descriptively compared with data from the Third Health Survey of Asturias.⁵ In this 2012 survey, detailed sociodemographic data were collected on 2100 residents of Asturias.

Results**Demographic data**

The majority (142; 95%) of the CM patients included in this study were women. Mean age was 45 years (range, 17-74).

Marital status

Regarding marital status, 89 patients (59.3%) were married, 33 (22%) single, 19 (12.6%) divorced or separated, and 9 (6%)

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