Chronic Migraines Linked to Other Health Issues, Even Unemployment

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If the intense pain associated with migraine headaches strikes often, you are more likely to have poorer overall health, be more depressed and make less money, according to a study published in the *Journal of Neurology, Neurosurgery and Psychiatry* and reported by HealthDay News.

Researchers studied about 12,000 headache-prone participants who complained of migraines. Scientists categorized the headaches as either episodic (happening less than 14 days each month) or chronic (occurring more than 14 days each month).

According to the article, researchers found that individuals experiencing chronic migraines also suffered from a slew of other problems.

People with chronic migraines were twice as likely as those unaffected to be depressed, anxious and troubled by pain. They were 70 percent more likely to have experienced a stroke, asthma, high blood pressure and diabetes.

In addition, those with chronic migraines had more job-related disability, made less money and worked fewer hours.

What does a migraine feel like? Although symptoms differ for individuals, some people report feeling an intense throbbing or dull ache on one or both sides of the head, experiencing nausea or vomiting, being bothered by light, noise or odors and feeling tired or confused.

Many things can set off a migraine. Common triggers include foods, smells, stress, a change in sleeping patterns, missed meals and, for women, hormonal changes related to menstrual cycles and birth control pills.

These violent headaches may last from four to 72 hours and seem to affect more women than men.

Researchers said the study's findings may help them learn how episodic migraines become a more chronic condition.

Learn how to manage migraine pain here.

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