ADHD Is Comorbid to Migraine in Childhood: A Population-Based Study

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Abstract

Objective:
Recurrent headaches and ADHD are prevalent in the pediatric population. Herein, we assess if ADHD is comorbid to headaches overall, to headache subtypes (e.g., migraine), and to headache frequency.

Method:
Informed consent and analyzable data were obtained for 5,671 children aged 5 to 12 years (65.9% of the target sample). Parents and teachers were interviewed using validated questionnaires based on the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (5th ed.; DSM-5). Relative risks were modeled using univariate and multivariate analyses.

Results:
As contrasted to nonheadache controls, the prevalence of ADHD was significantly higher in children with migraine (p < .001) but not in those with tension-type headaches. In children with migraine, the risk of ADHD increased as a function of headache frequency (p < .05).

Conclusion:
Migraine and frequent migraine are comorbid to ADHD. Future studies should focus on the impact of the association on the burden to the children and their families.