

Can children outgrow chronic daily headache?

15 July 2009

Most children who suffer from chronic daily headache may outgrow the disabling condition, according to research published in the July 15, 2009, online issue of *Neurology*, the medical journal of the American Academy of Neurology. Nearly 1.5 percent of middle school children are affected by chronic daily headache, which includes chronic migraines and tension-type headaches.

"Our results suggest there is hope for children who experience these headaches and for their parents, who also deal with the frustration and considerable disability that this condition can bring," said study author Shuu-Jiun Wang, MD, of the Taipei Veterans General Hospital and National Yang-Ming University School of Medicine in Taipei, Taiwan. "Over time, most of these children get better, eventually having less frequent migraine headaches as young adults."

For the study, scientists followed 122 children in middle school with chronic daily headache between the ages of 12 and 14 years old. Chronic daily headache was defined as experiencing 15 or more headache days per month, with each headache lasting for two or more hours per day.

The study found 60 percent of the children no longer had chronic daily headache after one year and 75 percent no longer had the symptoms after two years. After eight years, only 12 percent of the 103 children tested still experienced symptoms of chronic daily headache. However, 75 percent of the children had episodic migraine or probable migraine, while 11 percent became headache free after eight years.

"Parents and children should be prepared for the possibility that while chronic daily headache may get better over time, headaches in general may never fully go away, but for most children the headaches are much less frequent when they become young adults," said Wang.

The study found migraine history was a major risk factor for children having chronic daily headache into [young adulthood](#). Children who had chronic daily headache before age 13, those who overused pain medications, and those with the condition for more than two years were more likely to have higher headache frequency and the condition eight years later.

Source: American Academy of Neurology ([news](#) : [web](#))

APA citation: Can children outgrow chronic daily headache? (2009, July 15) retrieved 30 April 2021 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2009-07-children-outgrow-chronic-daily-headache.html>

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