Abstract Title: Emotional Abuse History and Migraine among Young Adults: Results from The Add Health Dataset

Press Release Title: Children Who Are Emotionally Abused By Adults May Be More Likely to Experience Migraine Later

Objective: To examine the relationship between childhood abuse and migraine among young adults.

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Design/Methods: Data was obtained from 14,484 adults aged 24 - 32 years old in the wave 4 of the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health. Childhood abuse was measured using three items asking respondents to recall three types of abuse (emotional, physical and sexual) that happened during childhood. Self-reported doctor diagnosis of migraine was used as dependent variable. Logistic regression was used to model effect of childhood abuse on migraine, controlling for socio-demographics, anxiety and depression.

Results: About 14.2% (n = 2,061) of the sample reported a migraine diagnosis. Childhood abuse was recalled by 60.5% (n =1,246) of the migraine sample and 49% (n = 6,088) of the non-migraine sample. Childhood abuse increased the chances of a migraine diagnosis by 55% (OR: 1.55; 95% CI 1.35 - 1.77). Of the three types of abuse, emotional abuse had a stronger effect on migraine (OR: 1.52; 95% CI 1.34 - 1.73) when compared to physical and sexual abuse. When controlled for depression and anxiety, the effect of childhood abuse on migraine (OR: 1.32; 95% CI 1.15 - 1.51) attenuated but remained significant. Similarly, the effect of emotional abuse on migraine decreased but remained significant (OR: 1.33; 95% CI 1.16 - 1.52), when controlled for depression and anxiety.

Conclusion: Childhood abuse had a significant effect on migraine. Emotional abuse contributed more to migraine than physical or sexual abuse. The interplay of depression and migraine on the relationship between childhood abuse and migraine need to be investigated further.

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