Headache Medicine

Analysis of the Relevance of the Classification of the Main Types of Headache

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Introduction
Any painful neurological condition affecting a specific cranial segment is termed a headache. When linked to nerve alterations, it's termed neuralgia (MORELI; SILVA; DA COSTA JÚNIOR, 2021). Classifying primary headache types is vital for understanding, diagnosing, and treating these disorders. Notably, "The International Classification of Headache Disorders" (ICHD) provides stringent criteria for precise and effective classification. ICHD's existence amplifies the significance of analyzing the relevance of primary headache classification, ensuring a globally consistent approach to diagnosis, treatment, research, and education in healthcare. Evaluating this classification's relevance is crucial for medicine and patients' quality of life, given varying therapeutic needs. Understanding headache classification aids in identifying underlying causes and contributes to neurological research.

Objective
This study aims to assess the importance of classifying common headache types, particularly using "The International Classification of Headache Disorders" (ICHD), and its influence on enhancing medical diagnosis, treatment, and research.

Methodology
To conduct this study, articles from 2018 to 2023 were researched in MEDLINE, LILACS, and SCIELO databases using keywords "Headache," "Classification," "Headache Disorders, Primary," and "Headache Disorders, Secondary" combined with "AND." Among 140 studies found, 8 met inclusion and exclusion criteria. Inclusion criteria encompassed studies addressing major headache types (e.g., migraine, tension- type headache, and cluster headache) using recognized diagnostic criteria like the International Classification of Headache Disorders (ICHD). Exclusion criteria included studies lacking specific headache data, misalignment with the timeframe or topic.

Results
Results underscored the medical complexity of headaches. The classification proposed by the International Headache Society, categorizing headaches based on clinical characteristics, has proven to be a valuable tool for healthcare professionals in diagnosing and treating these disorders adequately. The analysis of articles revealed that classifying headaches, such as migraine, tension-type headache, and cluster headache, provides a robust framework for clinical and therapeutic guidance. Moreover, reviewed studies emphasized the importance of recognizing symptom variability among patients and the need for a personalized approach to headache treatment. The analysis indicated that proper classification of headaches can contribute to a better understanding of underlying causes, enabling the adoption of more effective and personalized therapies. One of the analyzed studies demonstrated that for research focusing on the physiological and pathophysiological bases of headaches, the ability to distinguish between different headache types and subtypes is even more critical. Another analysis revealed that headaches accounted for 2.3% (244 cases) of the 10,450 emergency department admissions, with the majority (77.8%) being female patients. Headaches were categorized as primary, non-primary (including secondary and neuralgias), and unclassified, with proportions of 59.4%, 32%, and 8.6%, respectively, with migraine being the most common primary cause.

Conclusion
Therefore, the classification of various headache types is an essential element in both clinical practice and medical research dedicated to the study of headaches. However, it was also observed that classifying headaches can be challenging in some cases, especially when symptoms are atypical or overlapping, underscoring the ongoing importance of research and the development of refined diagnostic criteria and improved classification methods.

Keywords: Headache;Classification;Clinical Relevance.