Headache Medicine

National campaign to raise awareness about headache disorders: results of the event "Three's a crowd" in the city of Recife.

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Introdução

the Global Burden of Disease Survey classifies headache disorders as one of the five most prevalent diseases in the world population, especially primary headaches: migraine (14%) and tension-type headache (26%). In addition to the its high prevalence, headaches are responsible for causing disabilities in this large population, whether of personal, professional or social nature. However, headache disorders are still under-recognized, under-diagnosed and under-treated globally. Reports from patients claiming to suffer from this condition are common, but they do not seek professional health care, trying to manage it with self- medication or other practices guided by unqualified professionals. An initiative of the Brazilian Headache Society to raise awareness among the population and health professionals about the importance of correct diagnosis and treatment of headache disorders is the National Campaign "Maio Bordô (Burgundy May)". Objective: to describe the sociodemographic profile and headache clinical characteristics of the interviewees during the event.

Methods

this is a cross-sectional study, conducted by the Laboratory of Learning and Motor Control (LACOM - Department of Physiotherapy) and the Medicine Memorial, both belonging to the Federal University of Pernambuco, in partnership with the Brazilian Headache Society. The event was held on May 19th, 2023 and was conducted by neurologist, physiotherapists, undergraduate and graduate students. The interviews were conducted with 101 volunteers (n = 61 females and n = 39 males) and information on age, sex, presence of headache, search for specialized assistance, as well as clinical characteristics of their headaches, based on the International Classification of Headache Disorders, were collected. The data were organized according to the variables evaluated and inserted in an electronic database.

Results

headache was prevalent in 89.5% (n=77/101) of the sample and women were more affected than men (x^2 p < 0.001). The mean age was 47.4 years (SD 18.7, Mann-Whitney U P.0.029) and 68.6% (n=53/77) of the volunteers never sought professional help. Out of the 31.2% (n=24/77) who did, the professionals sought in increasing order of demand were a) neurologist (18.2%), b) general practitioner (13%), c) cardiologist (6.5%), d) otorhinolaryngologist (1.3%). Pulsatile pain was the most prevalent in the sample 59.5% (n = 44/77). Regarding the events, behaviors and exposures that precede or accompany headache episodes, the main triggering factors were stress (20.6%); caffeine withdrawal (5.9%) and anxiety (5.9%). When compared by gender, women presented a higher frequency of intense pain (27.1%) than men (14.1%), however, no statistically significant (Mann-Whitney U P = .0.608) difference between the groups was observed. Regarding the strategies adopted aiming pain relief, 60.5% (n = 52/77) of the volunteers reported the usage of analgesic medication, while 18.6% of the sample did not use any strategy. About 11.6% of the sample only rests and 9.3% used various strategies to relieve their headaches.

Conclusion

there was a high prevalence of headache disorders in the sample and women were the most affected. More than half of the volunteers who reported headache did not seek medical help and this probably justifies the high rate of drug consumption as a strategy to manage the headache episodes. These findings indicate the urgent need of further clarification for the population about headaches and their impacts on health. Moreover, such investigations can provide valuable insights to improve the management and treatment of headache disorders.

Palavras-chave: migraine disorders; surveys and questionnaires; data reliability.

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