



AN UPDATE ON MIGRAINES REPORT #2734

BACKGROUND: A migraine is considered a neurological disease with incapacitating neurological symptoms. The most common symptom is severe throbbing recurring pain, usually on one side of the head. However, in about 1/3 of attacks, both sides are affected. In other cases, disabling symptoms can be present without head pain such as: visual disturbances, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, extreme sensitivity to sound, light, touch and smell, and tingling or numbness in the extremities or face. About 25% of migraine sufferers also have a visual disturbance called an aura, which usually lasts less than an hour. In 15-20% of attacks, other neurological symptoms occur before the actual head pain, and attacks can last anywhere between 4 and 72 hours. Migraine is the 6th most disabling illness in the world. On average, every 10 seconds someone in the U.S. goes to the emergency room complaining of head pain, and approximately 1.2 million visits are for acute migraine attacks. While most sufferers experience attacks once or twice a month, more than 4 million people have chronic daily migraine, with at least 15 migraine days per month.

(Source: <https://migraineresearchfoundation.org/about-migraine/migraine-facts/>)

THE STAGES OF MIGRAINES: Migraines can progress through four stages: prodrome, aura, attack and post-drome. However, not everyone who has migraines goes through all stages. In the prodrome stage, you might notice subtle changes one or two days before a migraine including constipation; mood changes, from depression to euphoria; food cravings; neck stiffness; increased thirst and urination; and frequent yawning. For some people, aura might occur before or during migraines. Auras are reversible symptoms of the nervous system. They're usually visual but can also include other disturbances. Each symptom usually begins gradually, builds up over several minutes and lasts for 20 to 60 minutes. In the attack stage, a migraine usually lasts from four to 72 hours if untreated. How often migraines occur varies from person to person. They may occur rarely or strike several times a month. In the post-drome stage, which is after a migraine attack, you might feel drained, confused and washed out for up to a day. Some people report feeling elated. But sudden head movement might bring on the pain again briefly.

(Source: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/migraine-headache/symptoms-causes/syc-20360201>)

NEW DRUG FOR MIGRAINE?: The FDA has approved Reyvow (lasmiditan) to treat acute migraine. This drug is for active, short-term migraine and not intended to prevent migraine. It was tested in two randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled clinical trials which involved 3,177 adults with a history of migraine. Of them, 22 percent were taking a preventive medication for migraine. In both trials, the percentage of patients whose pain and other symptoms resolved within 2 hours of taking the medication were significantly greater among patients receiving Reyvow compared to those who took a placebo. Dr. Nina Riggins, a neurologist specializing in headache medicine from the University of California, San Francisco, said the introduction of Reyvow is a significant breakthrough because it's a new class of medications known as ditans. Ditans work similarly to triptans but do not have the cardiovascular effects. "It will allow us to use it for people with migraine who cannot take triptans due to concerns for stroke or heart attack," Riggins explained. Dr. Deena Kuruvilla, an assistant professor at Yale School of Medicine agreed that Reyvow is a "game-changer" because it works on different receptors than triptans.

(Source: <https://www.healthline.com/health-news/migraine-treatment-approved-by-fda#Testing-a-new-migraine-treatment>)

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