

## **Migraine and its associated factors, self-reported triggers, and impact among students of Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna**

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**Introduction and Objectives:** Headache, a common disorder of the nervous system, has a global prevalence of 50%. Among adults with headache, about 30% have migraine. Headache is a common complaint among medical students. Our objective was to determine the prevalence of migraine, its associated factors, self-reported triggers, and impact among medical students at the University of Jaffna.

**Methods:** An institutional-based descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna, among 295 medical students selected by stratified random sampling from five batches. A questionnaire comprising self and interviewer-administered sections was used to gather data. The International Classification of Headache Disorder (ICHD) 3 beta version and the Migraine Disability Assessment Test (MIDAS) was used to identify students with migraine and to assess their impact, respectively. Frequencies, percentages, and the Chi-squared test were used. The critical level was set at 0.05.

**Results:** Of 295 participants, 128 (43.4%) were male and 167 (56.6%) were females. In total, 206 (69.8%) students had a headache in the last three months, and 46 (15.6%) had symptoms compatible with migraine. Being female ( $p=0.01$ ), sleeping  $<7$  hours ( $p=0.022$ ), spending less time on exercise ( $p=0.001$ ) and having a higher level of stress on the Perceived Stress Scale ( $p=0.03$ ) were significantly associated with migraine. Emotional changes were the most common trigger (87%), followed by bright light (84.8%), examinations (73.9%), and extreme sound (70%). The menstrual phase was reported to be a trigger by over half (58.9%) of the females with migraine. Among those with migraine, about 30%, 33%, and 33% reported mild, moderate, and severe disability, respectively, and 4% had little or no disability.

**Conclusion:** In conclusion, the prevalence of migraine among students of the Faculty of Medicine, Jaffna, was 15.6%. Lifestyle factors such as sleep, exercise, and stress were found to be associated with migraine. While a substantial proportion experienced migraine-related disability, emotional changes, bright light, examinations, and extreme sound were the identified triggers among the medical students. Raising awareness on the benefits of lifestyle modification to prevent migraine may benefit medical students in Jaffna.

**Keywords:** Headache, Migraine, Medical students, Jaffna