

IMPROVING DISTRESS PERCEPTION IN CAREGIVERS OF MIGRAINE PATIENTS WITH DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOMS TREATED WITH FREMANEZUMAB. THE OBSERVATIONAL PROSPECTIVE REAL-LIFE MI-DEAR STUDY

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Background. To investigate whether the improvement in the migraine burden alleviates the distress of informal caregivers of patients affected by high-frequency episodic (H-FEM) or chronic migraine (CM) with depressive symptoms.

Methods. Consecutive adult patients with HFEM or CM and depressive symptoms who received a prescription of fremanezumab were considered, along with their caregivers. The enrolled dyads have been evaluated before and after 6 months since treatment initiation. In patients, we evaluated monthly migraine days (MMDs), monthly use of acute medications, pain intensity, migraine-related disability (MIDAS) integrated into the composite 4D score, and depressive symptoms (Patient Health Questionnaire-9; PHQ-9). Caregivers filled in the Relative Stress Scale (RSS). The mutuality scale (MS) was also collected in the dyads.

Results. 154 dyads were enrolled (patients aged 42.6 ±12.7 years; 80.5% female; and caregivers aged 48.1±12.2 years; 36.4% female). Of these, 150 completed the 6-month follow-up. After six months of treatment with fremanezumab, MMDs reduced from 15.3±6.5 to 6.3±5.5, the 4D Score from 54.3±11.7 to 30.7±16.9 ($p < 0.001$), and the PHQ-9 score from 11.4±5.1 to 7.6±4.6 ($p < 0.001$). PHQ-9 and 4D score variations resulted highly correlated ($r = 0.373$; $p < 0.001$). In parallel, caregivers showed a significant reduction in RSS score from 20.0±10.9 to 16.7±11.7 ($p < 0.001$). Multiple regression analysis showed that the reduction in RSS is primarily related to PHQ improvement ($p<0.001$) rather than to 4D score improvement ($p=0.703$). The mutuality scale (MS) scores did not significantly change from T0 to T6 in patients and caregivers

Conclusions. The MI-DEAR study highlighted that caregivers' elevated perceived stress improves after effective migraine management in patients. The improvement in the migraine burden was associated with a reduction in depressive symptoms in patients, which in turn was the main factor alleviating caregivers' stress.

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