

BEYOND MEDICATIONS: MINDFULNESS PRACTICE FOR PATIENTS WITH HIGH-FREQUENCY MIGRAINE WITHOUT AURA

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Background. Migraine is a complex neurological disorder with relevant epidemiological and social impact. Although pharmacological preventive therapies have improved migraine management, a strictly medical approach may not fully address the emotional, psychological and behavioral dimensions of the disease. A biopsychosocial model supports the integration of non-pharmacological strategies to improve pain coping and disease management. The aim of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of an online mindfulness program in patients with high-frequency migraine without aura and to assess its impact on clinical outcomes and psychological variables related to pain coping.

Methods. Twenty-six patients with migraine without aura according to International Classification of Headache Disorders, 3rd edition (ICHD-3) were included. Mean age was 37.3 ± 12.2 years; 22 patients were female and 4 were male. Patients completed questionnaires assessing disability, pain catastrophizing, anxiety and depression. Patients attended an online mindfulness-based program delivered in small groups. The program consisted of eight weekly sessions, each lasting 75 minutes. During the sessions, patients were instructed in mindfulness practice and were asked to perform daily home practice for 12 minutes using a pre-recorded session. Clinical follow-up was performed at 3 and 6 months after the end of the program using headache diaries. The following questionnaires were administered: Pain Catastrophizing Scale (PCS), State-Trait Anxiety Inventory and Beck Depression Inventory (BDI).

Results. At 6-month follow-up, monthly migraine days decreased from 7.28 ± 1.72 to 3.5 ± 3.5. PCS score significantly decreased from 26.2 ± 9.9 to 20.9 ± 8.5 ($p = 0.01$). BDI score decreased from 10.6 ± 8.6 to 6.4 ± 7.3, trait anxiety decreased from 47.4 ± 8.0 to 43.9 ± 9.8.

Conclusions. The reduction in monthly migraine days and in psychological measures suggests that mindfulness may have a positive effect on both clinical burden and pain-related coping strategies in patients with high-frequency migraine. Mindfulness practice may represent a useful non-pharmacological strategy for patients with high-frequency migraine without aura, potentially improving disease awareness, psychological coping and clinical outcomes within an integrated biopsychosocial approach.