# Migraine and other Headaches, and loss of Self Esteem

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**Introduction**

2008-2009 statistics indicate that there are close to 45-50 million Americans (about 15% out of a population of 320 million) suffer out of migraine headaches on a regular basis. Some of them get about 3-4 times a month. Of the several types of headaches, perhaps, migraines are most intimidating and severe. The statistics also indicate that nearly 90% of the population experiences some type of headache during any given year. While people could still function with headaches with the aid of medications, migraine headaches usually grounds the sufferers. Considerable research and pain management activities are going on in USA and around the world to help the migraine sufferers.

## Migraine headaches, the silent destroyers

In my childhood days, I watched my mother suffer out of severe headaches. At times she used to cry, unable to bear the pain. Also, she used to throw up. At that time, I did not know that they were migraine headaches. As I started my junior high school, I started developing headaches myself. Family physician use to treat with some medication. But, I used to suffer 2 or three days, before I could become functional again. The doctors told me that I inherited migraine headaches from my mother, and would have to learn to live with them. Sure I became dejected and depressed. However, my mother taught me not to give up and practice tolerating them, and try to function normally. I also used to throw up during these migraine attacks. My younger brothers and sisters used to take pity on me and used to try to comfort me.

I discovered that during the migraine headaches, I became totally non functional. The pain used to start on one side of the head, and would propagate to the other parts. My plans to be part of sport and drama teams during the high school days became shattered, as I could not predict when I would get the migraine. I also saw some of my teachers suffer out of this type of headache, and would excuse themselves from the classes, because they could not function. By then I was convinced that the migraine headache would be a silent destroyer and I was so sorry for myself that I had to live with the condition, rest of my life. ***I got angry with my mother, because I inherited the migraines from her genetically. But then I realized, how silly and inconsiderate I had been towards my mother, since she was attending on to the household work, giving us food, and taking care of us, in spite of her migraine attacks. She pardoned with for my irrational behavior, and blessed me that I would sure learn to handle migraines, and no need to worry. My father tried to teach me tolerance against not only migraine headaches, but any such conditions and eventualities. He also told me on several occasions, that I should learn to get over the anger and frustration at all times, and set an example for my younger brothers and sisters.*** These compassionate teaching from my parents have helped me through not only migraine headaches, but other eventualities in life.

## Loss of vision, balance, and self esteem

Even though I got used to handling the migraine headaches, even today, they are intimidating. Migraine headache is considered a neurological medical condition.

Approximately 15 per cent of the population suffer from migraine, which is by far the most common neurological condition. It is three times more common among women than men, probably because of hormonal factors: it is most prevalent during the female reproductive years.

The headaches that it causes, often accompanied by extreme nausea, vomiting, or sensitivity to light, sound or smell, can be so disabling that it is impossible to work or even to leave a darkened room. A recent study estimated that it costs the economy between £4 billion and £5 billion a year in England alone.

Attacks can vary widely in frequency and severity, but about a third of sufferers have attacks at least three times a month, and just over half of these are reported as severe.

Acute attacks can often be treated with drugs belonging to a class known as triptans, which can reduce both duration and intensity. Patients who suffer frequently can also take one of three classes of preventive drugs - beta-blockers, serotonin antagonists, and anti-convulsants otherwise prescribed for epilepsy.