Migraine attack frequency, duration, and pain intensity: disease burden derived from a community-based survey in northern Tanzania.

Abstract:
One goal of the campaign "Lifting the burden: The global campaign against headache" is to highlight existing evidence about headache worldwide. In this context, the aim of our study was to report the migraine-related headache burden in northern Tanzania. From December 2003 until June 2004 a community-based door-to-door survey was undertaken in northern Tanzania, using multistage cluster sampling. Based on the criteria of the International Headache Society, 7412 individuals were enrolled in this survey. Migraine patients' average annual attack frequency was 18.4 (n = 308, standard deviation [SD] ± 47.4) with a mean duration of 16.4 hours (SD ± 20.6). The average headache intensity per patient was 2.65 (SD ± 0.59) with a calculated loss of 6.59 (SD ± 26.7) working days per year. Extrapolation of data to the investigated population (n = 7412) resulted in annual migraine burden of 281.0 migraine days per 1000 inhabitants. To our knowledge, this study reports for the first time the burden that arises from migraine headache in a rural population of sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). As the presented migraine-related burden is considerable, we hope that our data will increase the awareness among local decision makers in allocating resources for treatment and research on headache.