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REVIEW ARTICLE

A Short Review of Migraine Headaches in Nigeria: Epidemiology, Current Challenges, Treatment Approaches, and Future Directions for Improved Management

*Enquête Sur les Réseaux Sociaux Sur la Prévalence
des Complications Neurologiques Post-COVID chez les Nigériens*

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE: Migraine, a leading cause of global disability, disproportionately burdens low-resource countries like Nigeria, where healthcare inequities, cultural stigma, and infrastructural gaps hinder effective management. Despite global advances in migraine therapeutics, Nigeria's burden remains understudied, with fragmented data on epidemiology, treatment access, and outcomes.

METHODS: We conducted a narrative review of the literature on migraines in Nigeria using sources such as PubMed, MEDLINE, African Journals Online (AJOL), and Embase. This review synthesizes a broad range of peer-reviewed articles, regional reports, and gray literature to provide an interpretative overview of the topic.

RESULTS: Available evidence suggests that migraine prevalence in Nigeria is estimated at 15–20%, with urban areas reporting rates as high as 26% and a pronounced gender disparity (3:1 female-to-male ratio). Rural regions experience significant underreporting, often attributed to cultural interpretations of migraine symptoms as spiritual phenomena. Most patients rely on over-the-counter analgesics, with 30% developing medication-overuse headaches. Advanced therapies such as triptans and CGRP inhibitors are largely inaccessible due to prohibitive costs.

CONCLUSION: Nigeria's approach to migraine care lags significantly behind global standards, underscoring the need for context-specific innovations. Priority areas include the expansion of telemedicine to overcome specialist shortages, incentives for local medication production, and the integration of traditional healers into formal referral networks. Policy reforms and collaborative efforts among stakeholders are essential to align Nigeria's migraine management with evidence-based practices, ultimately reducing the burden on individuals and the economy. **WAJM 2024; 42 (1): 67-72**

KEYWORDS: Migraine disorders; Healthcare disparities; Nigeria; Therapeutics; Health policy

RÉSUMÉ

CONTEXTE ET OBJECTIF: Les barrières culturelles et les facteurs perceptuels propres aux Africains sont connus pour limiter le nombre de personnes recherchant des soins médicaux pour les affections post-COVID. L'objectif de cette enquête sur les réseaux sociaux était de déterminer la charge des complications neurologiques post-COVID au Nigeria chez les individus avec un COVID-19 confirmé.

MÉTHODES: Nous avons mené une enquête transversale en ligne auprès de personnes au Nigeria ayant une infection confirmée ou suspectée par PCR au SARS-CoV-2, survenue entre mars 2020 et avril 2022. Notre enquête a utilisé Kobo Toolbox® et a été diffusée sur plusieurs plateformes en ligne (notamment WhatsApp®, Facebook® et Twitter (X)®). Les données recueillies comprenaient les caractéristiques démographiques des participants, le profil des symptômes du COVID-19, les résultats des tests SARS-CoV-2 et la survenue de symptômes neurologiques persistants.

RÉSULTATS: Nous avons analysé les données de 963 participants ayant une infection confirmée ou suspectée par le COVID-19. L'âge moyen était de 36,9 ± 9,9 ans, et 555/963 (57,6 %) étaient des femmes. Seuls 174/963 individus (18,1 %) avaient une confirmation PCR du SARS-CoV-2 à un moment donné pendant la pandémie, parmi lesquels 133 (76,4 %) présentaient des symptômes compatibles avec la définition de cas. Un total de 47/174 (27,0 %) des participants positifs à la PCR ont signalé des symptômes post-COVID aigus, et 46/174 (26,4 %) ont rapporté des plaintes neurologiques post-COVID. Les symptômes les plus fréquemment signalés étaient la fatigue (25 ; 14,4 %), la faiblesse généralisée (22 ; 12,6 %) et les troubles de la mémoire (15 ; 8,6 %). Un peu plus de la moitié des personnes présentant des symptômes post-COVID (25/47 ; 53,2 %) ont recherché des soins, dont 21/25 (84 %) dans une structure médicale. Les autres ont consulté soit une pharmacie communautaire (1/25), soit un magasin de médicaments brevetés (3/25).

CONCLUSION: Malgré le faible taux de tests au Nigeria, la prévalence des complications neurologiques post-COVID est d'environ un individu sur quatre. D'autres études sur le pronostic et la prise en charge des séquelles neurologiques post-COVID au Nigeria sont nécessaires.

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MOTS CLÉS: COVID, SARS-CoV-2, COVID long, séquelles neurologiques, Nigeria

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