

MANAGING PRIMARY HEADACHES: A CLINICAL PRACTICE AUDIT IN A SPECIALISED CHILDREN'S HEADACHE CENTRE

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Introduction

- Primary headache disorders are common in adolescents, and the most commonly encountered headache diagnosis in neurology practice is migraine, which affects approximately 10% of children and adolescents.
- Headaches can be debilitating; therefore, early diagnosis and treatment may improve the long-term prognosis of children and adolescents with headache disorders.

Objective

To study the phenotypes, effectiveness of treatments and to audit the clinical practices based on the UK NICE clinical guideline CG150 (updated June 2025).

Methodology

We retrospectively reviewed patients who attended the headache clinic at Great Ormond Street Hospital during one-year period from May 2023 to May 2024.

Results

214 patient visits were analysed of which 71 (33%) were first attendances and 143 (67%) were follow up attendances. 59% female, with mean age of 15 years (6 - 19 years) and mean age of headache onset 8.3 years (6 months - 15 years). 57% of the patients had co-morbidities, almost half with neuropsychiatric co-morbidities. Acute and prophylactic treatment across all headache phenotypes were well prescribed except none of the patients with tension type headache were offered acupuncture for prophylaxis.

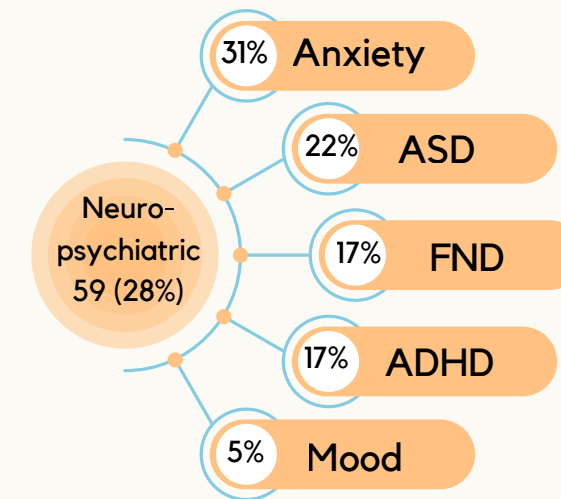
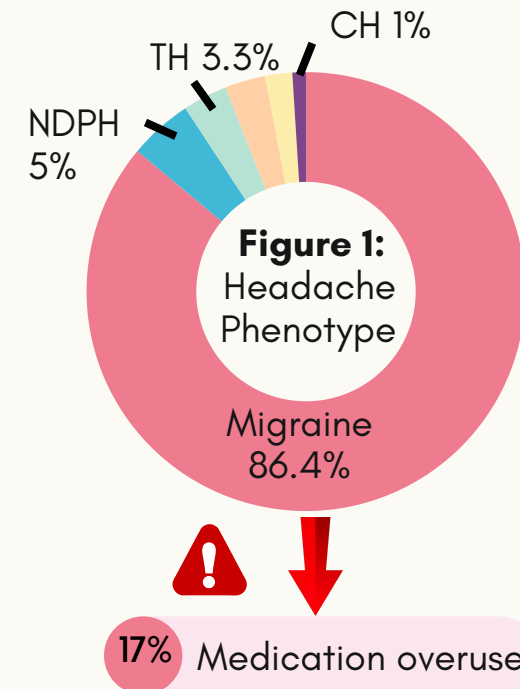


Figure 2: Neuropsychiatric Co-morbidities

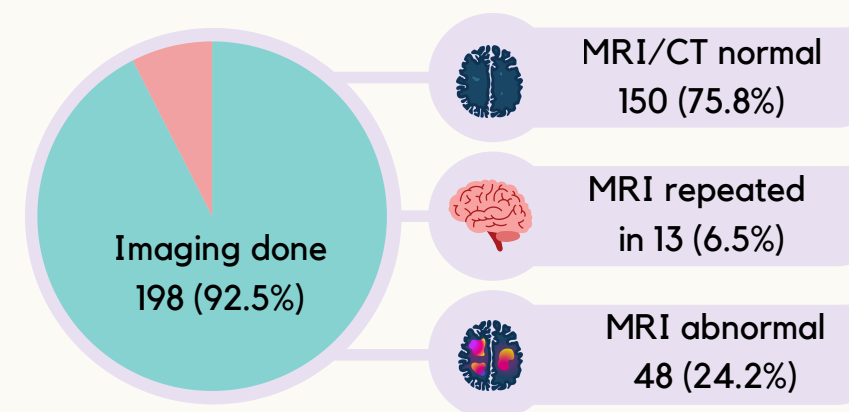


Figure 3: Investigations

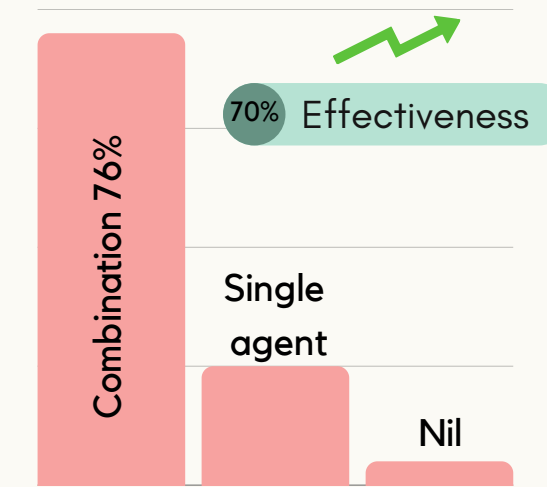


Figure 4: Migraine Acute treatment

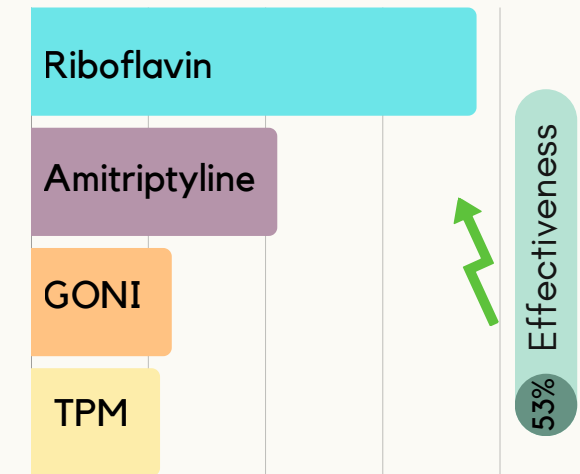


Figure 5: Migraine Prophylaxis treatment

Conclusion

Majority of the patients were well-phenotyped and received appropriate acute and prophylactic treatment according to the headache phenotypes. Multi-disciplinary approach is the key in managing young patients with headaches especially among those with co-morbidities. GONI seems to be as effective as other available prophylactics in this cohort.

References

- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. Updated June 2025. Headaches in over 12s: diagnosis and management (CG150)
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