

## **U.S. Headache Consortium Emphasizes Prevention of Migraines**

### ***Migraine Sufferers May Benefit from Treatment that Reduces Frequency, Severity of Attacks*** Ⓟ

(NAPS)—Migraine headaches are a common disorder affecting 28 million Americans—about 13 percent of the U.S. population. Migraine is a severe form of headache that results in throbbing head pain, and is often accompanied by nausea and sensitivity to light and/or sound. Migraines can disrupt quality of life at home and at the workplace. In fact, recent studies show that migraines are the second leading cause of work absence, and cost American employers \$17 billion annually in missed work and reduced productivity.

To help migraine sufferers function better at home and at work, the U.S. Headache Consortium recently released new guidelines for the treatment of migraines. Based on years of research and practice, the treatment guidelines aim to help prevent, treat, and improve the diagnosis of migraine headaches.

For people who experience migraine headaches infrequently, treating their migraine attacks as they occur, also referred to as acute treatment, is sufficient. However, the U. S. Headache Consortium found that of the millions of Americans suffering from migraines—11 million endure severe, debilitating attacks—only 3 to 5 percent take medication to prevent the pain of migraines before it occurs.

The Consortium concluded that more patients might benefit from

preventive treatment. They recommend preventive treatment for people who experience any of the following: migraines that significantly interfere with daily routines, despite acute treatment; migraines that occur frequently; failure or lack of response to treatments taken as the migraines occur; or if the patient prefers to take preventive treatment.

The consortium also rated the current FDA-approved medications for the prevention of migraines based on effectiveness and side effects. They gave the highest rating, medium to high efficacy and mild to moderate side effects, to divalproex sodium, propranolol, and timolol.

A copy of the guidelines can be obtained from the American Academy of Neurology on the Internet at <http://www.aan.com>.

The U.S. Headache Consortium is composed of physicians and patient care advocates. Members include the American Academy of Neurology, the American Headache Society, the American Academy of Family Physicians, the American College of Emergency Physicians, the American College of Physicians-American Society of Internal Medicine, the American Osteopathic Association and the National Headache Foundation.

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