

SPEAK OUT ABOUT MIGRAINE



How much do you know about migraine disease?

Migraine is an invisible and often trivialized disease, but everyone knows someone with migraine disease. *It affects 1 of every 4 families.*

13% of the US population suffers from migraine disease – 39 million Americans
10 million Americans experience the most severe chronic form of the disease.

Need to adjust public attitudes and health priorities.

Migraine is the third most disabling of all diseases for middle-aged adults, according to the World Health Organization.

For many, the symptoms of their migraine prevent them from doing what they want to do *for one week* of every month.

Migraine costs American employers \$13 billion a year because of missed workdays and impaired work function. It peaks for women between the important ages of 20-40. More than half of those with migraine feel that their condition has affected their career.

The disease can interfere with school and athletic activities.

It strains relationships at work, with friends and among family members. On average they miss more than 7 important events a year, such as birthdays, graduations or holiday gatherings. Many prefer to avoid making plans and commitments.

Migraine is not a headache.

Migraine pain is often described as worse than childbirth, kidney stones or broken bones. But pain is only part of the picture. Migraine is a genetic neurological disease that affects many parts of the body. It has a broad range of severity and it is variable and unpredictable. Many people with migraine also have a second chronic disease, including a sleep or mood disorder, hypothyroidism, fibromyalgia or irritable bowel syndrome.

Those with migraine are reluctant to talk about their disease.

Those with migraine disease will not show the pain, fatigue, cloudy thinking and other odd symptoms of facial pressure, visual changes, irritable stomach and more. Most are often afraid to admit to these hardships because they worry about losing their jobs or friends. Most know that those who do not suffer from migraine do not understand the severity of their disease. Remember that they want to work (and can work) and want to have fun and be there for their friends.

Migraine can be treated better.

Most people with migraine wish that they could manage their disease better. Employers can be the leaders in this area of health care. Wellness Programs can include simple workplace accommodations, stress and relaxation instruction, weight loss, migraine-specific meal options, and exercise programs and referrals to health professionals that could address the majority people with migraine that lack proper diagnosis and treatment. Employees can become more productive. The widespread adoption of Wellness Programs has the potential to reduce the cost of health care insurance, especially the expensive emergency care of migraine.

Loud public support is crucial.

Unlike most neurological disease, much is known about how migraine works. Migraine research includes the study of pain and therefore is critical to finding safer pain treatments to replace opioids and post brain trauma syndromes. Every voice that supports migraine research helps to influence how the government chooses to spend your tax dollars.

Advocacy

Every one should think about how they can help pull migraine sufferers from the darkened rooms. Be flexible and understanding. Volunteer for an advocacy organization. Engage in Brain Health Fairs or Fundraising Events. Donate.

The migraine community can be fun.

Join the challenge to take a picture of yourself and maybe including a message, your pet, your friends or your boss and post it to #Shades for Migraine. Check out shadesformigraine.com. It also serves as a one-stop shopping for migraine resources.

Learn more about migraine.

This is one of the most common health conditions, but is rarely appreciated for the silent toll that it takes on lives. While it is as common as high blood pressure and diabetes, it steals more quality of life and interferes more with job performance. Learn how to create a supportive environment and maximize the talents of the millions who live with migraine.