

## QUALITY OF LIFE IN PERIMENOPAUSAL WOMEN WITH MIGRAINES

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### Abstract

Purpose: To assess the impact of migraine headaches on the quality of life experienced by a sample of perimenopausal women across two descriptive studies. Method: Participants completed Migraine-Specific Quality of Life Questionnaires (MSQOL) 20-item version and the SF-36 Health Survey questionnaires in two studies (n=53) that also used daily headache/menstrual diaries, health history questionnaires, focus groups, qualitative interviews, and online discussion boards to assess experiences, self-care methods and perceptions of women with migraines. These data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Findings: The results of the MSQOL scores were not significantly different from those of other migraine populations. The SF-36 scores of the 8 component scales were similar to, or significantly better than, those reported for other groups of migraineurs; they were significantly worse than scores for general populations and menopausal women of similar or slightly older ages without headaches. Although mental health scores for this group of women were not consistent with clinical depression, several SF-36 scales (pain, vitality and social functioning) were similar to those for patients with clinical depression. Discussion: Quality of life for perimenopausal women with migraines is similar to, or better than, other groups of migraineurs, and significantly worse than it is for general populations, including women in the same age range without migraines. The results of this study are consistent with other studies showing that migraineurs, diabetics and other chronic disease sufferers have a similar quality of life. Perimenopausal women with migraines, while not having diminished physical function, experience significant levels of pain, diminished energy and difficulties with meeting their emotional and physical role expectations. Health care providers, who are often unaware of the diminished quality of life suffered by their patients with migraines, should consider the overall impact of migraine headaches on their patients' daily life.