

Restless Legs in Migraine Patients: Prevalence and Severity

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Background

We aimed to study not only prevalence but more importantly severity and correlation between sleep quality and restless legs syndrome (RLS) in a large population of well-defined migraine patients as poor sleep presumably triggers migraine attacks.

Methods

In a large cross-sectional and observational study, data on migraine and RLS were collected from 2,385 migraine patients (according to ICHD-IIIb) and 332 non-headache controls. RLS severity (International RLS Study Group severity scale) and sleep quality (Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index) were assessed. Risk factors for RLS and RLS severity were calculated using multivariable-adjusted regression models.

Results

RLS prevalence in migraine was higher than in controls (16.9% vs. 8.7%; multivariable-adjusted OR 1.83; 95% C.I. 1.18-2.86; $p=0.008$), and more severe (adjusted severity score: 14.5 ± 0.5 vs. 12.0 ± 1.1 ; $p=0.036$). Poor sleepers were overrepresented among migraine patients (50.1% vs. 25.6%; $p<0.001$). Poorer sleep quality was independently associated with RLS occurrence (OR 1.08; $p<0.001$) and RLS severity ($p<0.001$) in migraine patients.

Conclusion

RLS is not only twice as prevalent but also more severe in migraine patients, and associated with decreased sleep quality.