



## Migraine – the facts

- 1 in 7 people in the UK suffer from migraine
- Migraine is more prevalent than diabetes, epilepsy and asthma combined
- It affects over twice as many women as men
- It affects people from all age groups (even young children) and all social classes
- The World Health Organisation has classified migraine amongst the top 20 most disabling lifetime conditions
- Migraine costs the U.K. around £1 billion per annum
- 190,000 people will have a migraine attack in any one day
- Every day more than 100,000 people are absent from work or school in the UK as a result of migraine.
- A migraine attack can last for between 4 and 72 hours
- Sufferers experience an average of 13 attacks each year
- Migraine is more than just a headache. Other symptoms can include:
  - *visual disturbances (flashing lights, blind spots in the vision, zig-zag patterns etc.);*
  - *nausea & vomiting;*
  - *sensitivity to light (photophobia);*
  - *sensitivity to noise (phonophobia);*
  - *sensitivity to smells (osmophobia);*
  - *tingling/pins and needles/weakness/numbness in the limbs*
- Migraine is triggered by a huge variety of factors - not just cheese, chocolate and red wine! For most people there is not just one trigger but a combination of factors which individually can be tolerated, but when they occur together a threshold is passed and a migraine is triggered
- Migraine is a very individual condition and trigger factors and symptoms vary tremendously from person to person.
- Although there is no cure, there is now a wide range of effective treatments available and many migraine management techniques to help reduce its impact.

# Migraine Action – *the charity for migraineurs*



Migraine Action is a national charity which provides support and information to thousands of migraineurs and their families, and works to raise awareness of this still much-misunderstood condition. The charity runs a telephone help-line, organises education days for migraineurs around the UK, and offers a wealth of information via a quarterly newsletter, numerous leaflets on all aspects of migraine and its main website ([www.migraine.org.uk](http://www.migraine.org.uk)). Migraine Action also launched three age-specific websites for young migraineurs in September 2010 as part of its 'Young Migraineurs Campaign', all of which can be accessed via [www.migraine.org.uk/youngmigraineurs](http://www.migraine.org.uk/youngmigraineurs). Migraine Action raises vital funds to support specialist migraine clinics and research into the diagnosis, treatment and cure of migraine and other headache disorders. It is a totally independent membership charity and its core work is funded solely by donations and membership subscriptions.

## **Migraine Action – over 50 years supporting people with migraine**

- Migraine Action (then the British Migraine Association) was launched in 1958. Within a year it had 1,000 members
- Today, Migraine Action (registered charity number 207783) has over 5,000 members around the UK
- Migraine Action is a founder member of the World Headache Alliance, and is also in contact with 25+ lay headache organisations throughout the world
- In 2004 Migraine Action launched an educational initiative on migraine in children with a lesson plan for 8-11 year olds distributed to schools. In 2009 it launched the 'Young Migraineurs' campaigns with dedicated websites for young migraineurs and information packs for them, their parents, teachers and school nurses
- In 2007 Migraine Action launched an official Medical Advisory Board to provide the charity and its members with expertise from a medical perspective. The Chairman of the Board is Dr Andrew Dowson, Director of Headache services at King's College Hospital, London
- Each year Migraine Action raises awareness through 'Migraine Awareness Week' which begins on the first Sunday in September

## **Migraine Action – Spokespeople**

Lee Tomkins, Director at Migraine Action, is an eloquent speaker on migraine and the history and work of Migraine Action. Members of Migraine Action's Medical Advisory Board are also available for interview. Migraine Action can offer the 'patient' view on the issues surrounding migraine and has access to a wide range of media volunteers around the UK.

## **Migraine Action contact details for publication:**

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