

The Findings of the Effectiveness of the ELISA Test for the Prevention of Migraine Study

Thank you for taking part in our study. We have completed the analysis of the data you provided us with and have written a paper, which we have sent to a medical journal.

What did the study find?

Participants in the study were randomly allocated to either the 'true' or 'sham' diet group. When we analysed the returned questionnaires, we found that eliminating foods based on the test did not reduce the disability or impact of migraines on daily life or the number of migraines significantly after 12 weeks, (only a non-statistically significant 15% reduction in the number of migraines) but it did statistically significantly reduce the number of migraines after 4 weeks (23%). This means that at 4 weeks we think the difference in migraine attacks between the two groups was unlikely to occur by chance. However, at 12 weeks the difference was smaller and there was a greater possibility that the 15% difference occurred by chance rather than there being a 'true' difference.

What do the findings from this study mean?

The findings suggest that diet elimination based on the ELISA (enzyme linked immuno-sorbent assay) test can help reduce the number of migraines for the first 4 weeks but may not do so for a longer period of time. Diet change does not seem to reduce the severity of any attacks that do occur. There may be several reasons why there was a lower benefit after 4 weeks: it may have been difficult for people to keep to the diet; or it may be that the change only has a transient effect. Our study could not tell us which of these reasons could be true, which will require further research in the future. The study you have contributed to will help other researchers in the field of migraine research.

Why did we carry out this study?

The cause of migraine attacks is still not completely understood and treatment is complicated by the differing symptoms experienced. The most common treatments are drugs, either over the counter or those prescribed by a GP or specialist. Some people find that avoiding certain foods and drinks can reduce the number and/or severity of their migraines. The aim of this study was to find out whether a simple blood test was able to identify foods to which individuals with migraine may be sensitive and what were the number of headache days reported over the 12 weeks of diet elimination.

How was the study carried out?

We included participants aged 18 to 65, who had a diagnosis of migraine for at least 12 months, had no evidence of any other significant co-existing illnesses and experienced 2 or more migraine attacks (or 4 or more headache days) in the previous 4 week period (based on a participant completed questionnaire). 167 people were eligible and were randomly allocated, by computer, to one of two groups. Both groups were asked to eliminate all foods on their diet sheet for a period of 12 weeks. During the study, participants completed questionnaires at various time points and completed a daily diary. At the end of the 12 weeks all participants were asked to re-introduce the eliminated foods and carry on with them unless they had any migraine symptoms. At the end of the study all participants were told which diet group they were allocated to and those in the 'sham' group were provided with their true diet sheet.

If you have any questions about the results you can contact:

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