

No evidence of an association between silent brain infarcts and having migraine with aura

May 3 2016

A large cross-sectional study focused on women with migraines with aura and compared their brain MRI images with those of women not suffering from migraine. No differences between these two groups of women were found with regard to number of silent infarcts and white matter hyperintensities (WMH). The findings were published today in *Brain*.

More than 10% of the female population suffers from migraines. Migraines with aura is seen in one out of three of these patients, who experience transitory neurological symptoms in connection with their [migraine](#) attacks. Previous studies raised concern with regard to a possible connection between migraines and an increased risk of silent brain infarcts and white matter hyperintensities, particularly in [women](#) suffering from migraine with aura. Silent brain infarcts and WMHs have been reported to increase the risk of dementia. "This prompted us to evaluate whether women with migraine with aura might be more likely to have evidence of silent brain infarcts and an increased load of [white matter](#) hyperintensities on their brain scans," says research team leader Dr David Gaist of the Odense University Hospital and University of Southern Denmark.

The researchers identified women between 30 and 60 years of age through the Danish Twin Registry. This nationwide registry enabled them to identify 172 women with migraine with aura (cases), and 139 unrelated women with no migraine (controls) who underwent MRI brain imaging at a single centre. Thirty four co-twins who, unlike their

participating twin sisters, did not suffer from migraine with aura, were also scanned.

"We found no evidence of an association between migraine with aura and silent brain infarcts or [white matter hyperintensities](#)," says Dr Gaist. "This held true for the main analyses comparing cases with unrelated controls, and for analyses focusing on twin pairs where one twin suffered from migraine with aura, and the other did not."

"We believe patients suffering from migraines with [aura](#) and their physicians should find these results re-assuring," says Dr Gaist.

More information: "Migraine with aura and risk of silent brain infarcts and white matter hyperintensities: an MRI study"; Gaist D, Garde E, Blaabjerg M, Nielsen N, Krøigaard T, Østergaard K, Møller H, Hjelmberg J, Gøbel Madsen C, Iversen P, Kyvik KO, Siebner HR, Ashina M. Migraine with aura and risk of white matter hyperintensities and silent brain infarcts: an MRI-study. *Brain*. [DOI: 10.1093/brain/aww099](#)

Provided by Oxford University Press

Citation: No evidence of an association between silent brain infarcts and having migraine with aura (2016, May 3) retrieved 21 July 2023 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2016-05-evidence-association-silent-brain-infarcts.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--