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***“New data shows headaches hit 79% of Australian households hard costing the Australian economy over \$35.7 billion annually – with stress the biggest trigger”***

**SPINAL HEALTH WEEK 22–28 MAY 2023**

Today, the Australian Chiropractors Association (ACA) launched **Spinal Health Week (22 - 28 May 2023)** with the release of a new survey, ***‘The Impact of Headaches in Australia’*** revealing the true impact of headaches on the lives of 65% of Australians that costs the Australian economy over \$35.7 billion annually.

Spinal Health Week is Australia’s longest-running national campaign (over 25 years) dedicated to improving the spinal health and wellbeing of all Australians. In 2023, the campaign’s focus is on headaches and what Australians can do to minimise the acute impact headaches have on families, workers and the economy.

More Australians suffer from migraine or tension headaches than diabetes, epilepsy and asthma combined with the survey revealing the most common headache triggers being stress (at home, work and school) and spinal health conditions.

According to the independent survey commissioned by the ACA, ***‘The Impact of Headaches in Australia’***, stress is the leading headache trigger for 70% of Australian headache sufferers while 96% of ACA accredited chiropractors surveyed observed stress as the most prevalent headache trigger followed by neck pain.

With more than 7 million Australians suffering tension headaches and 4.9 million suffering chronic migraines, headaches are holding Australians back from living their best life by restricting social activity, concentration and productivity at home and work, resulting in a diminished quality of life for many sufferers.

Dr David Cahill, Chiropractor and President of the ACA said, ***“The Impact of Headaches in Australia*** survey, shows the disturbing consequences of headaches in the majority (79%) of Australian households.”

The national survey of more than 1000 participants showed 88% of households aged 18-40 years suffer from headaches, 84% of headache sufferers are working-age Australians (18-60 year-olds), while the highest incidences of headaches nationally was in the 31-40 age bracket.

“Alarming, Australian headache sufferers cited stress as the leading cause (70%) of headaches, 59% said poor sleep was a contributing factor while 52% reported neck pain as triggers for headache,” said Dr Cahill.

The survey also shows that more Australian women suffer headaches (74%) than men at 54%. Significantly, 59% of female headache sufferers experienced headaches every week. Also more than 71% of headache sufferers reported experiencing spine-related pain.

“Migraine and tension headaches are the most common headache disorders. However, there are many types of headaches and many triggers that cause them. While some may be just a mild inconvenience, others can be severe, chronic and have a debilitating effect on the daily life of sufferers,” Dr Cahill said.

“Headaches relating to spinal health conditions can be cervicogenic (neck related) while tension headaches and migraines can be triggered by stress, neck and spinal problems,” said Dr Cahill.

“While the annual cost of headaches to the Australian economy is in the billions, ACA’s survey has exposed the true cost to headache sufferers as immeasurable when headaches and migraines have a dramatic and debilitating impact on every aspect of their lives,” Dr Cahill said.

“The burden of headaches can rob sufferers of sleep, essential relaxation, social activities, precious time with children, family and friends, and can greatly restrict productivity at home, work and school,” he said.

Of all headache sufferers, 74% said they experienced difficulty concentrating, 70% said they became more irritable, 65% said they lost sleep due to headaches, 59% said they experienced mental exhaustion, 47% experienced physical exhaustion, 41% said headaches impacted their ability to work, and 37% said headaches impacted their ability to perform daily activities.

Of the 514 female respondents, 74% said they suffered headaches, 18% reported their children suffered headaches and 23% said their partner also suffered from headaches.

40% of women said headaches impacted their ability to perform daily activities. 24% reported struggling with depression or anxiety as a consequence of headaches. 23% said headaches impacted their social life. 15% said headaches impacted their ability to engage and play with their children while over 14% said suffering headaches impacted their relationships with family and friends.

The fact that women are more affected by headaches according to the survey was verified in an internal ACA chiropractor survey where 95% reported female patients are the most afflicted by headaches and 62% of chiropractors said many headache patients also present with other spinal health conditions.

Chiropractic healthcare may relieve headaches and migraines in many cases, and may also be able to effectively treat the cause to minimise headache re-occurrence and other spinal health problems which, according to the ACA chiropractor's survey, 66% of chiropractors saw an increase in patients presenting with headaches during the COVID-19 pandemic due to increased stress and neck pain induced by poorly set up workspaces at home.

Of those respondents in the independent survey that said they'd consulted a chiropractor for headaches, 89% reported headache relief with 81% also reporting gaining additional spinal health benefits.

Following chiropractic treatment, 86% of female patients reported relief from headaches. 42% reported their headaches either significantly improved or were totally resolved, and 81% reported gaining additional spinal health benefits including relief from back and neck pain, improvements in mood, sleep, flexibility and energy resulting in improved overall quality of life.

"However, according to the survey, Australians appear to consider headaches to be a '*normal part of everyday life*' and only treat the symptoms with over the counter medications rather than seek professional, drug-free healthcare to identify and treat the cause which can often be spine-related," Dr Cahill said.

"What we found troubling is that over 50% of headache sufferers only treated the symptoms by popping a pill rather than consulting a chiropractor to relieve headaches and limit re-occurrence by treating the cause rather than masking an often treatable spinal health condition," he said.

While medication has a role to play in managing some headaches, all medication should be considered in light of potential side effects that is not without risk, including the commonly used painkiller, paracetamol.

With the recent decision of the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) to reduce the maximum size of paracetamol product packs due to the marked increase of paracetamol poisoning cases and toxic liver diseases caused by paracetamol overdose; consulting a chiropractor for drug-free treatment of headaches is a far healthier option and the leading treatment of choice among many headache sufferers.

ACA accredited chiropractors are Australia's leaders in providing proven relaxation methods and drug-free holistic healthcare that treats the underlying causes of headaches and not just the symptoms.

People experiencing headaches can download ACA's free **Headache Fact Sheet** from [consultachiro.org.au](https://consultachiro.org.au) and for drug-free pain relief, headache sufferers should consult an ACA accredited chiropractor who can provide quality chiropractic healthcare encompassing stress management, good posture, regular exercise, rest and a healthy diet to promote overall health and wellbeing.

During national **Spinal Health Week 2023**, the ACA is tackling spine related headaches 'head on' by increasing awareness of the painful condition and improving spinal health through effective, non-invasive, drug-free treatments to limit the impact of headaches on the quality of life of over 13 million Australians.

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[spinalhealthweek.org.au](https://spinalhealthweek.org.au) | [consultachiro.org.au](https://consultachiro.org.au)

[#SpinalHealthWeek](#) [#ConsultAChiro](#) [#Headache](#) [#HeadacheConsultAChiro](#) [#ChiropracticHealthcare](#)

**NOTE: See Journalist Notes for key findings of 'The Impact of Headaches in Australia' and references.**

## SPINAL HEALTH WEEK 2023 - MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES

For interviews, images and vision for National Spinal Health Week, contact: Insight Communications: 02 9518 4744

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**MEDIA CENTRE: Download high resolution images and footage [click here: bit.ly/SHW-23](https://bit.ly/SHW-23)**

### ACA MEDIA SPOKESPERSONS

#### **Dr David Cahill – President, Australian Chiropractors Association - National, NSW & Victoria**

ACA President, Dr David Cahill has been a registered, practicing chiropractor since 1991, in the Malvern East area since 1998. He loves helping people of all ages, from newborn babies and toddlers, to those in their more senior years. David has always been very active in post-graduate education, continually upskilling in many aspects of chiropractic. David was the chiropractor for the Hawthorn Football Club from 2016 to 2020. He enjoys taking care of the elite footballers, integrating his chiropractic care in a team with the other support disciplines, particularly physiotherapy. David's passion is to truly help people have transformative experiences through chiropractic, and to better explore their magnificent potential.

#### **Dr Damian Kristof – Vice President, Australian Chiropractors Association - National, NSW & Victoria**

Nutritionist, Naturopath and Chiropractor, Dr Damian Kristof is a highly sought-after presenter and speaker in the Wellness industry. With over 20 years of experience, Damian's in-depth knowledge of the body, nervous system, food functions and responses coupled with his friendly and dynamic presenting style, has him in high demand. Focusing on food as key to unlocking optimal health and wellness, Damian presents in-depth facts and concepts that have never before been readily available to the public - offering all audiences from industry experts to the general public highly valuable content as he engages, educates and inspires audiences across the globe.

#### **Dr Anthony Coxon – National & Victoria**

Anthony is a caring and respected chiropractor with 30 years' experience. In 2009, he completed Post Doctorate studies in Chiropractic Neurorehabilitation. This additional qualification gives Anthony skills in dealing with more complex cases, particularly patients that experience balance disorders and dizziness. He is the current Vice President of the Australian Chiropractors Association (ACA). In addition to running a busy practice, Anthony has also appeared on countless print, radio and television media spots including 'A Current Affair', 'Today Tonight', the 'Today Show' and the Evening news on all commercial television stations. Anthony sees daily how chiropractic care and a healthy lifestyle can bring vitality and wellbeing to his patients.

#### **Dr Kim Lie Jom – NSW**

Dr Kim Lie Jom is a caring, dynamic and talented chiropractor with over 20 years' experience that has earned the respect and trust of his professional colleagues and patients alike. Kim's knowledge of chiropractic grew as did his interest within the profession. Paediatric chiropractic, sports chiropractic and the concept of wellness chiropractic are of particular interest to him. With three young children of his own he is very aware of how making healthy lifestyle choices from a young age will serve you later in life. He is passionate about chiropractic and feels that the profession has enormous health benefits to offer the community at large and his goal is to educate and adjust as many families as possible toward optimal health through natural chiropractic care.

#### **Dr Billy Chow – South Australia**

Dr Billy Chow graduated as a chiropractor from RMIT University in 1998. Since graduating he has had a varied and enriching career in private practice, on boards and in business. Dr Chow is passionate about educating and inspiring people to make better choices and to live happier and healthier lives. Dr Chow believes that being on the Spinal Research Board is an honour and allows him to give back to his profession through service and provides him an avenue to promote, fund and facilitate more research faster for the chiropractic profession.

#### **Dr Ashley Dent – Tasmania**

Dr Dent graduated from Macquarie University in Sydney in 2010 where he was awarded the Ed Devereaux Award for Services to the Student Body. He is active within the Australian Chiropractors Association at a state and national level chairing the public engagement committee and being a member of two other committees. He volunteers his time with St Vincent de Paul to bring chiropractic care to the homeless and vulnerable in Hobart. Dr Dent has a keen passion for helping people improve their long standing (chronic) back and neck pain and then progressing their spinal health through exercise and rehabilitation so that they are stronger and healthier than they've ever been.

#### **Dr Joshua Tymms – Western Australia**

Dr Joshua Tymms discovered chiropractic as a child and has been fascinated with its application ever since. He graduated from Murdoch University with a Double Degree in 2006 and is registered as a chiropractor. He finished his International Chiropractic Sports Science Diploma in 2007 and has worked at many international level sports events. He is studying a double masters in public health and business administration to help build skills in these areas.

# SPINAL HEALTH WEEK JOURNALIST NOTES

## Spinal Health Week - 22-28 May 2023

**Spinal Health Week (22 - 28 May 2023)** is an initiative of the Australian Chiropractors Association (ACA).

Spinal Health Week has been running for more than 25 years and is Australia's longest running national health awareness campaign dedicated to improving the spinal health of Australians of all ages.

Annually, Spinal Health Week focusses on a specific spinal health issue while promoting the importance of maintaining good spinal health to improve overall wellbeing.

In 2023, the campaign focusses on the causes of headaches and the negative effects headaches are having on families, workers and the Australian economy.

With more than 7 million Australians suffering from debilitating tension headaches, and more than 4.9 million suffering chronic migraine, the economic impact to Australia exceeds \$35.7 billion annually.

During national **Spinal Health Week 2023**, the ACA will tackle spine related headaches head on by increasing awareness of the painful condition and improving spinal health through effective drug-free solutions that limit the impact headaches have on the quality of life of over 46% of Australians.

## The Australian Chiropractors Association

The Australian Chiropractors Association (ACA) is the peak body representing chiropractors.

The ACA promotes the importance of maintaining a healthy spine to improve musculoskeletal health and offers drug-free spinal healthcare and lifestyle advice to help Australians lead and maintain healthy lives.

With approximately 3,000 members, the ACA is Australia's largest chiropractic health body that's taken a leadership role in promoting the importance of maintaining a healthy spine to maintain the overall health and wellbeing of Australians at home, work or at school.

## The cost of headaches on Australians and the economy

Headaches and migraines can be debilitating and impact every aspect of our lives. Annually, 7 million Australians suffer from tension headaches while 4.9 million suffer from migraines causing lost social activity, concentration and productivity in the workplace.

With more Australians suffering from migraine or tension headaches than diabetes, epilepsy and asthma combined; the cost to the Australian economy is around \$35.7 billion annually.

However, the real cost to headache sufferers is immeasurable. The impact headaches have on their quality of life can greatly limit productivity at work and study, and rob sufferers of essential relaxation, social activities and precious time with children, family and friends.

## What are the most common headache disorders?

The three main headache disorders are tension and cervicogenic (neck related) headaches and migraines – all having disabling potential.

## What causes headaches?

There are many causes of headaches but studies have shown some of the most common causes are stress (at home, work and school) and spinal health conditions.

A wide range of activities that can cause spinal health conditions that lead to headaches include sports and exercise; poor posture (at work and home); physical activities (dancing, cycling, shopping, driving, gym, etc.); eye strain (including excessive screen time); dehydration; caffeine dependence and withdrawal; smoking and bright or noisy environments.

## Tension Headache

**Tension headaches** are the most common form of headache causing mild to moderate pain. Described as a 'hat band' tightness around the forehead, temples and back of the head, tension headaches are often triggered by stress or fatigue. However, chronic tension headaches (those that persist for a long period of time or constantly recur), can be caused by ongoing stress and fatigue as well as physical and psychological or emotional health conditions. Chiropractic care provides an effective, reliable drug-free treatment for tension headaches and minimises reoccurrence.

## Cervicogenic Headache

**Cervicogenic (neck related) headaches** are due to a disorder of the top of the spine involving the bones, joints, muscles or ligaments in that area. Cervicogenic headache pain starts at the neck and can spread to the eyes, forehead, and temples. Pain is moderate to severe but not excruciating or throbbing. Cervicogenic headache is often associated with mild to moderate dizziness/light-headedness/unsteadiness. Studies confirm drug-free chiropractic care is more effective in treating cervicogenic headaches than mobilisation or exercise alone.

## Migraine

**Migraines** are a chronic and disabling condition that often begins with a dull headache and develops into a constant, throbbing and pulsating pain at the temples and the front or back of the head. Sufferers can also experience nausea and vomiting and sensitivity to light and noise.

Migraines can be a complex and varied disorder with a range of severity, types and symptoms. 20% of migraines are 'Classic' migraines (with Aura) and 80% are 'Common' migraines (without Aura). An Aura is an important symptom that typically precedes the headache. Sufferers may also experience blurred vision, blind spots, and pins and needles in the face, hands, or arms.

Although migraines are often under-diagnosed and under-treated, chiropractors can help diagnose migraine and provide drug-free care that's been shown to decrease migraine duration and severity.

## Treating headaches with medication

While pain medications (prescription and over the counter) may provide temporary relief from headache; studies have shown that in some cases, the medications used to alleviate headaches can also trigger headaches. These are known as 'Medication Overuse Headaches' which is one of the reasons why drug-free chiropractic care is the treatment of choice among many headache sufferers.

## Drug-free chiropractic care – Treats the cause, not just the symptoms

ACA accredited chiropractors are Australia's leaders in chiropractic care - a proven, effective, drug-free, low risk treatment for headaches, migraines and a range of spinal health conditions.

ACA chiropractors are university trained healthcare professionals that effectively treat headaches and other spinal health conditions.

ACA chiropractors use specialised non-surgical techniques including specific spinal adjustments, various manual therapies and soft tissue techniques while assessing lifestyle factors and providing relaxation methods to reduce reliance on medication. By treating the cause and not just the symptoms of headaches, chiropractic care improves the overall health and wellbeing of Australians.

**Chiropractors conduct 300,000 consultations every week.**

# THE IMPACT OF HEADACHES IN AUSTRALIA

An Independent National Consumer Survey Conducted By Pure Profile

**1008 Respondents** Ⓞ **514 Female** Ⓞ **493 Male** Ⓞ **1 Non-Binary**  
**650 Reported Experiencing Headaches** | **383 Female & 267 Male**

## Key Findings: Headaches in Australia

- Ⓞ **79% of Australian households have headache sufferers – 8 Million Households**
  - Ⓞ **88% of households aged 18-40yrs reported suffering headaches**
  - Ⓞ NSW and Victoria reported 81% of households contained headache sufferers
  - Ⓞ Metropolitan areas account for 67% of headache households
  - Ⓞ Regional areas account for 33% of headache households
  - Ⓞ **84% of headache sufferers are of working age (18-60yo)**
- Ⓞ **64.5% of Australians suffer from headaches**
  - Ⓞ 74.5% of Australian women suffer headaches
  - Ⓞ 54.2% of men suffer headaches
  - Ⓞ 31-50 year olds reported experiencing the most headaches
- Ⓞ **Top 3 demographics reported experiencing headaches**
  1. Women aged 31-40
  2. Women aged 41-50
  3. Men Aged 31-40 and Women 18-24 (tied)
- Ⓞ **44% of Australian women experience headaches every week**
  - Ⓞ **59% of female headache sufferers experience headaches every week**
  - Ⓞ 32% of female headache sufferers experience 1-2 headaches per week (often)
  - Ⓞ 21% of female headache sufferers experience 3 or more per week (frequently)
  - Ⓞ 6% of female headache sufferers experience daily headaches
- Ⓞ **57% of headache sufferers reported experiencing headaches every week**
  - Ⓞ 31% 1-2 headaches per week (often)
  - Ⓞ 20% 3 or more per week (frequently)
  - Ⓞ 6% daily
- Ⓞ **71.4% of headache sufferers reported spine-related pain including**
  - Ⓞ 44.5% neck discomfort
  - Ⓞ 39.7% neck pain
  - Ⓞ 36.2% neck stiffness
  - Ⓞ 34% shoulder tightness or pain or discomfort
- Ⓞ **82% of female headache sufferers also reported spine-related pain compared to 56.6% of male sufferers.**
- Ⓞ **42.9% of Australians who experience headaches have sought a medical diagnosis**
- Ⓞ **Top 3 diagnosed headache types:**
  - Ⓞ 28.8% tension headaches
  - Ⓞ 21.3% migraine with/without aura
  - Ⓞ 12.8% allergy headaches
  - Ⓞ 32.6% could not recall their headache type
- Ⓞ **Stress is the single biggest headache trigger for 70% of Australians suffering headaches followed by poor sleep (59%), neck pain (52%) and sleep position (32%).**
- Ⓞ **73% of women and 64% of man ranked stress as their main trigger for headaches**
  - Ⓞ Alcohol / dehydration accounted for just 19% of headaches

- ◎ **51.3% of Australians manage headaches with over the counter medication** (paracetamol or ibuprofen) while **34.3% visited a GP**, 18% had a massage or exercised and 15% managed with prescription medication and 14% visited a chiropractor.
  - 61% of women managed headaches with paracetamol or ibuprofen compared to 41.2% of men
  - Although stress is the main trigger reported for headache sufferers (both male and female), implementing stress management strategies or meditating to help relieve headaches was the second last reported step taken to relieve headaches, above taking no action and waiting for it to subside.
- ◎ **The impact of headaches 'on Australians' showed:** (percentage of population)
  - **47.7% of Australians reported concentration difficulty due to headaches**
  - 45% of Australians reported became more irritable
  - 38.3% experienced mental exhaustion and 30% physical exhaustion
  - 26.1% reported their ability to work was impacted by their headaches
  - 24% said their ability to perform daily activities such as chores were impacted by the headaches
- ◎ **The impact of headaches 'on Australian headache sufferers' showed:** (percentage of sufferers)
  - **74% of headache sufferers reported concentration difficulty**
  - 70% became more irritable
  - 59% experienced mental exhaustion and 47% physical exhaustion
  - 41% of headache sufferers reported their ability to work was impacted by their headaches
  - 37% of headache sufferers reported their ability to perform daily activities such as chores were impacted by the headaches

### Key Findings: Chiropractic Care

31% of respondents (314) said they consulted a chiropractor for headache relief. 38.9% of respondents (392) had consulted a chiropractor for other spine-related pain issues.

- ◎ **89% of patients reported headache relief when they consulted a chiropractor with 81% also gaining added spinal health benefits** in addition to headache relief. 39.8% reported their headaches either significantly improved or were totally resolved through chiropractic healthcare. 24.5% reported partial improvement.
  - **85.9% of female patients reported headache relief when they consulted a chiropractor for headaches.** 41.9% reported their headaches either significantly improved or were totally resolved through chiropractic care and 21.6% reported partial improvement.
  - **91.5% of male patients reported headache relief when they consulted a chiropractor for headaches.** 37.4% reported their headaches either significantly improved or were totally resolved through chiropractic care and 27.6% reported partial improvement.
  - **81% of respondents who consulted a chiropractor for headache reported gaining additional spinal health benefits including gaining relief from back and neck pain, improved sleep, mood, flexibility and energy.**
- ◎ **Of the respondents who had consulted a chiropractor for other spinal health issues, 87.5% reported chiropractic care provided spine-related pain relief.** 44.9% reported their pain either significantly improved or was totally resolved through chiropractic care and 25.5% reported partial improvement.
- ◎ Respondents consulted a chiropractor because **34% were referred by friends and family, 26.3% were referred by a GP and 21% read chiropractic care could help.**

## DATA TABLES:

### AGE & GENDER OF HEADACHE SUFFERERS

**[a] Percentage based on proportion of ALL headache sufferers:** e.g. 12% of all headache sufferers were women aged 31-40

**[b] Percentage based on proportion of headache sufferers of the SAME gender:** e.g. 20% of female headache sufferers were age 31-40

**[c] Percentage based on proportion of headache sufferers to ALL RESPONDENTS:** e.g. 8% of all respondents experiencing headache were women aged 31-40

Age	Total Respondents (n1008)			Total Headache Sufferers (n650)			[a] % of ALL Headache Sufferers			[b] % of Gender of Headache Sufferers		[c] % Headache Sufferers of ALL Respondents		
	All	Female	Male	All	F	M	Total	F	M	F	M	All	F	M
18-24	122	69	53	95	59	36	15%	9%	6%	15%	13%	9%	6%	4%
25-30	117	62	55	84	48	36	13%	7%	6%	13%	13%	8%	5%	4%
31-40	184	98	86	137	78	59	21%	12%	9%	20%	22%	14%	8%	6%
41-50	169	89	80	126	73	53	19%	11%	8%	19%	20%	13%	7%	5%
51-60	158	84	74	101	61	40	16%	9%	6%	16%	15%	10%	6%	4%
61-70	130	61	69	68	38	30	10%	6%	5%	10%	11%	7%	4%	3%
71-80	82	40	41	33	23	10	5%	4%	2%	6%	4%	3%	2%	1%
81+	46	11	35	6	3	3	1%	0.5%	0.5%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%
Total	n1008	n514	n493	n650	n383	n267	n650			n383	n267	n1008		

### LOCATION OF HEADACHE SUFFERERS

**[a] Percentage based on proportion of households with headache sufferers in that State & Region:** e.g. 79% of NSW Metro households reported headache sufferers

**[b] Percentage of headache sufferers from state/region:** e.g. 65% of individuals in Metropolitan Victoria experience headaches

**[c] Percentage of parents reporting children suffer headaches from state/region:** e.g. 18% of parents in Metropolitan Victoria reported their children experience headaches.

**[d] Percentage of individuals reporting their partner suffers headache from state/region:** e.g. 20% of respondents from Metropolitan Tasmania reported their partners experience headaches.

			[a]	[b]		[c]		[d]	
State	Total Households	Households w Headache	% Households	Total 'I Suffer' Headache	% 'I Suffer' Headache	Total Kids Suffer	% Kids Suffer	Total Partner Suffer	% Partner Suffer
NSW Metro	207	163	79%	137	66%	38	18%	67	32%
QLD Metro	98	79	81%	64	65%	11	11%	27	28%
VIC Metro	194	155	80%	126	65%	35	18%	42	22%
SA Metro	56	43	77%	36	64%	5	9%	17	30%
WA Metro	84	68	81%	56	67%	14	17%	21	25%
ACT	17	14	82%	13	77%	2	12%	2	12%
TAS Metro	10	8	80%	8	80%	1	10%	2	20%
NT Metro	6	4	67%	4	67%	1	17%	2	33%
NSW Reg.	115	97	84%	80	70%	15	13%	31	27%
VIC Regional	62	52	84%	38	61%	12	19%	19	31%
QLD Regional	105	77	73%	61	58%	11	11%	22	21%
SA Regional	16	11	69%	9	56%	2	13%	3	19%
WA Regional	23	17	74%	13	57%	2	9%	4	17%
TAS Regional	12	8	67%	5	42%	1	8%	4	33%
NT Regional	3	1	33%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	<i>n1008</i>	<i>n797</i>		<i>n650</i>		<i>n150</i>		<i>n263</i>	

State	Total Respondents	Total Households with Headache Sufferers	% Households	I Suffer Headaches	% I Suffer Headaches
ACT	17	14	82%	13	77%
NSW	322	260	81%	217	67%
NT	9	5	56%	4	44%
QLD	203	156	77%	125	62%
SA	72	54	75%	45	63%
TAS	22	16	73%	13	59%
VIC	256	207	81%	164	64%
WA	107	85	79%	69	65%

## Frequency of Headaches for Headache Sufferers

**[a] Percentage based on gender of sufferers:** e.g. 32% of female headache sufferers experience headaches 1-2 times per week.

**[b] Percentage based on ALL headache sufferers:** e.g. 31% of all headache sufferers experience weekly headaches. 19% of headache sufferers are women who experience 1-2 headaches per week.

**[c] Percentage based on headache sufferers to ALL RESPONDENTS:** e.g. 13 % of Australians reported experiencing frequent headaches (3 or more per week). 12% of Australian women reported headaches often (1-2) per week.

**[d] Percentage of age group:** e.g. 30% of 18-24 year olds reported experiencing headaches often (1-2 per week)

Frequency of Headache	Headache Sufferers Impacted			[a] % of Gender		[b] % of Headache Sufferers			[c] % of All Respondents		
	Female	Male	Total	% Female	% Male	% ALL	% Female	% Male	% Total	% Female	% Male
Daily	22	20	42	6%	16%	6%	3%	3%	4%	2%	2%
Frequently (3+ week)	82	48	130	21%	49%	20%	13%	7%	13%	8%	5%
Often (1-2 week)	123	77	200	32%	75%	31%	19%	12%	20%	12%	8%
Sometimes (1-2 month)	111	84	195	29%	73%	30%	17%	13%	19%	11%	8%
Every Now & Then (Every few months)	36	33	69	9%	26%	11%	6%	5%	7%	4%	3%
Seldom (1-2 per year)	5	3	8	1%	3%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Other	4	2	6	1%	2%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%
	n383	n267	n650	n383	n267	n650			n1008	n514	n493

[d] % Of Age Frequency of ALL respondents		18-24 years	25-30 years	31-40 years	41-50 years	51-60 years	61-70 years	71-80 years	81 or older
Daily		12%	8%	4%	2%	3%	2%	1%	0%
Frequently: 3+ per week		21%	18%	17%	18%	14%	8%	5%	0%
Often: 1-2 per week		30%	21%	28%	30%	23%	21%	18%	9%
Sometimes: 1-2 per month		23%	26%	30%	25%	26%	24%	27%	7%
Every Now & Then (Every few months)		7%	15%	12%	13%	17%	18%	12%	11%
Seldom: 1-2 per year		0%	5%	4%	8%	9%	16%	13%	22%
Other		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
No:		7%	7%	5%	4%	8%	11%	24%	2%

## Triggers of Headaches:

**[a] Percentage based on ALL headache sufferers:** e.g. Stress was the trigger for 70% of all headache sufferers. 43% of headache sufferers triggered by stress were women.

**[b] Percentage based on headache sufferers of SAME gender:** e.g. 73% of female headache sufferers were triggered by stress.

**[c] Percentage based on headache sufferers to ALL RESPONDENTS:** e.g. 45% of Australians reported stress triggering headaches.

Triggers	Total Headache Sufferers			[a] % of Headache Sufferers			[b] % of Gender of Sufferers		[c] % of ALL Respondents		
	All	Female	Male	All	Female	Male	Female	Male	All	Female	Male
		n650		n650	n383	n267	n383	n267	n1008	n514	n493
Stress	452	281	171	70%	43%	26%	73%	64%	45%	28%	17%
Poor sleep	384	223	161	59%	34%	25%	58%	60%	38%	22%	16%
Neck pain	340	211	129	52%	32%	20%	55%	48%	34%	21%	13%
Back pain	180	117	63	28%	18%	10%	31%	24%	18%	12%	6%
Shoulder pain	186	128	58	29%	20%	9%	33%	1%	18%	13%	6%
Certain foods	77	56	21	12%	9%	3%	15%	8%	8%	6%	2%
Alcohol/dehydration	122	75	47	19%	12%	7%	20%	18%	12%	7%	5%
Poor sleep position	210	140	70	32%	22%	11%	37%	26%	21%	14%	7%
Poor posture	174	107	67	27%	16%	10%	28%	25%	17%	11%	7%
Sinus congestion	153	101	52	24%	16%	8%	26%	19%	15%	10%	5%
Menstrual cycle or hormone related	126	120	6	19%	18%	1%	31%	2%	13%	12%	1%
Other	37	22	15	6%	3%	2%	6%	6%	4%	2%	1%

## Impacts of Headaches

[a] **Percentage based on of impact:** e.g. 59% headache sufferers who experienced difficulty concentrating were women.

[b] **Percentage based on ALL headache sufferers:** e.g. 74% of all headache sufferers reported difficulty in concentration as a result of headache. 74% of female headache sufferers reported difficulty in concentration as a result of headaches.

[c] **Percentage based on proportion of headache sufferers to ALL RESPONDENTS:** e.g. 55% of Australian women reported difficulty concentrating because of headaches.

Impacts of Headache	Headache Sufferers Impacted			[a] % of Impact		[b] % of Headache Sufferers			[c] % of All Respondents		
	Female n383	Male n267	Total	% Female	% Male	% ALL n650	% Female n383	% Male n267	% Total n1008	% Female n514	% Male n493
Difficulty concentrating	283	198	481	59%	41%	74%	74%	74%	48%	55%	45%
Became more irritable	270	184	454	59%	41%	70%	71%	69%	45%	53%	42%
Lost sleep	226	198	424	53%	47%	65%	59%	74%	42%	44%	45%
Mental exhaustion	223	163	386	58%	42%	59%	58%	61%	38%	43%	37%
Physical exhaustion	177	125	302	59%	41%	47%	46%	47%	30%	34%	28%
Impacted ability to work	159	104	263	60%	40%	41%	42%	39%	26%	31%	24%
Impacted ability to perform daily activities e.g. household chores	152	90	242	63%	37%	37%	40%	34%	24%	30%	21%
I've struggled with depression or anxiety	93	71	164	57%	43%	25%	24%	27%	16%	18%	16%
I'm less mobile/able to exercise	94	64	158	59%	41%	24%	25%	24%	16%	18%	15%
Impacted my ability to socialise with friends	87	65	152	57%	43%	23%	23%	24%	15%	17%	15%
Impacted relationships with family and friends	54	42	96	56%	44%	15%	14%	16%	10%	11%	10%
Impacted ability to play or engage with my kids	59	33	92	64%	36%	14%	15%	12%	9%	11%	8%
Other (please specify)	7	6	13	54%	46%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%

## SUPPORTING DATA & MEDIA REPORTS FROM EXTERNAL SOURCES

### POPULATION STATISTICS

- **National Households:** 10.2 Million <https://www.ibisworld.com/au/bed/number-of-households/31/>
- **Population:** Australia's population was 26,124,814 people at 30 September 2022.
  - [www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/national-state-and-territory-population/sep-2022](http://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/national-state-and-territory-population/sep-2022)

### THERAPEUTIC GOODS ADMINISTRATION - PARACETAMOL

TGA makes final decision to reduce paracetamol pack sizes [www.tga.gov.au/news/media-releases/tga-makes-final-decision-reduce-paracetamol-pack-sizes](http://www.tga.gov.au/news/media-releases/tga-makes-final-decision-reduce-paracetamol-pack-sizes)

- On 3 May 2023, the Australian Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) published its final decision to reduce the maximum size of packs for various paracetamol products to address overuse of paracetamol that can lead to liver injury and paracetamol overdose. Following a report commissioned by the TGA that examined the incidence of serious injury and death from intentional paracetamol overdose, the restrictions to packaging of paracetamol will come into effect from 1 February 2025.

### HEADACHE AUSTRALIA

Australian Statistics <https://headacheaustralia.org.au/what-is-headache/prevalence-and-cost-of-headache/>

- **4.9 million Australians experience migraine** (Migraine in Australia Whitepaper, Deloitte Access Economics Report, 2018).
- Prevalence of migraine increases from 12 years to about 40 years and declines thereafter in both sexes.
- 23% of households contain at least one person who has migraine – approximately 2.4 million households
- Up to **seven million tension-type headache sufferers** (36% for men and 42% for women [Wolff's Headache And Other Head Pain 7th ed – S.D Silberstein, R.B Lipton, D.J Dalession 2001]).
- Nearly all those with migraine and 60% of those with tension-type headache **experience reductions in social activities and work capacity**.
- The direct and indirect costs of migraine alone would be about **\$35.7 billion per annum** (Migraine in Australia, Deloitte Access Economics Report, 2018).

## MIGRAINE AUSTRALIA

2022-2023 Pre-Budget Submission [https://treasury.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-03/258735\\_migraine\\_australia.pdf](https://treasury.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-03/258735_migraine_australia.pdf)

- The National Health Survey conducted by the ABS puts 'long term' migraine at 6.2% of Australians, well below the **global prevalence rate of 14%**. As a result of MIGRAINE AUSTRALIA'S advocacy, the ABS has conceded their number is flawed and have agreed to change the way they ask about migraine in the next National Health Survey.
- MIGRAINE AUSTRALIA'S research has found that the rate of migraine in **Australia may be one of the highest in the world at 28%. This is 1 in 4 people; more prevalent than diabetes, epilepsy and asthma combined.**  
- All-Party Parliamentary Group on Primary Headache Disorders (APPGPHD), 2010.
- **The Global Burden of Disease Study**, found migraine is the **seventh most disabling condition in the world.**
- Services Australia has advised there are 13,948 Australians currently on Disability Support Pension listing migraine among their top conditions, at an estimated cost of \$350m a year.

## WORLD HEALTH ORGNISATION REPORT

### Headache Disorders and Public Health, Education and Management Implications

World Health Organisation, Geneva, WHO/MSD/MBD/00.9, Sept 2000

- Headache is a symptom of a range of neurobiological disorders, including some of the most common and ubiquitous. **Adults aged 20 – 50 years are the most likely sufferers but children and adolescents are affected too.**
- **There is a lack of worldwide studies on the different headache sub-types.** Those carried out have employed different methodologies although headache definitions were standardised by the International Headache Society in 1988.
- What is undisputed is that **migraine and tension-type headache are the most prevalent headache disorders and, both with disabling potential, they have the greatest impact on public health.**
- **Migraine** is the more thoroughly investigated, and better understood. Onset of migraine is from childhood onwards but **most commonly in the 20s and 30s** and relatively infrequently after the age of 40 years; therefore, prevalence increases from the first to fourth decades and thereafter declines. Migraine may nevertheless be a significant health issue among children.
- The frequency of migraine attacks is highly variable, from 1/year in some to more than 1/week in as many as 25% of sufferers. **The average may be as high as 21 episodes per sufferer per year.**
- **Tension-type headache is the most widespread of headache disorders.** Onset is often in the teenage years and prevalence peaks in the fourth decade and then declines. Overall, one-year prevalence may exceed 60% although it is apparently lower in some countries.
- **A large part of the population have mild and infrequent tension-type headache (once monthly or less), with 20-30% experiencing headache episodes more often. Tension-type headache is also more common in women, in a ratio of 1.5:1.**
- These common neurological complaints impose a significant health burden, with nearly **all migraine sufferers and 60% of those with tension-type headache experiencing reductions in social activities and work capacity.** Despite this, both the public and the majority of healthcare professionals tend to perceive headache as a minor or trivial complaint. As a result, the physical, emotional, and economic burdens of headache are poorly acknowledged in comparison with those of other, less prevalent, neurological disorders.

## INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH METRICS AND EVALUATION - INTERNATIONAL

*Global, regional, and national burden of migraine and tension-type headache, 1990–2016: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2016 - Published October 22, 2018 [www.healthdata.org/research-article/global-regional-and-national-burden-migraine-and-tension-type-headache-1990%E2%80%932016](http://www.healthdata.org/research-article/global-regional-and-national-burden-migraine-and-tension-type-headache-1990%E2%80%932016)*

- Almost **3 billion individuals were estimated to have a migraine or tension-type headache in 2016:**
  - 1.89 billion (95% uncertainty interval [UI] 1.71–2.10) with tension-type headache
  - 1.04 billion (95% UI 1.00–1.09) with migraine.
- Because migraine had a much higher disability weight than tension-type headache, migraine caused **45.1 million (95% UI 29.0–62.8) and tension-type headache only 7.2 million (95% UI 4.6–10.5) YLDs globally in 2016.** (One YLD represents the equivalent of one full year of healthy life lost due to disability or ill-health)
- The headaches were most burdensome in **women between ages 15 and 49 years**, with migraine causing **20.3 million (95% UI 12.9–28.5) and tension-type headache 2.9 million (95% UI 1.8–4.2) YLDs in 2016**, which was 11.2% of all YLDs in this age group and sex. Age-standardized DALYs for each headache type showed a small increase as SDI increased.