

ICHD-3 migraine defining symptoms by phase of the migraine cycle: Results of the MiCOAS Qualitative Study

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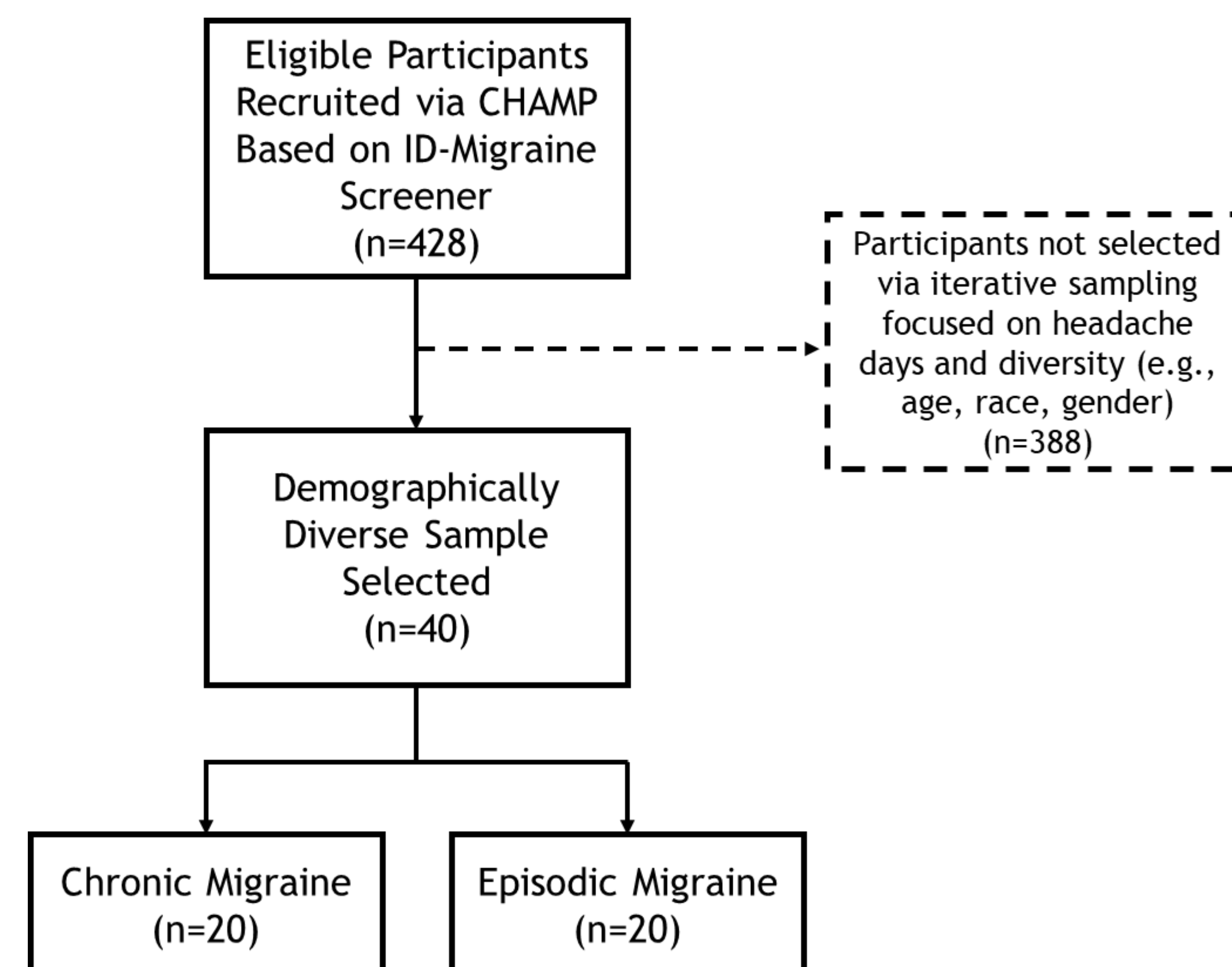
Background & Objectives

- Migraine is associated with psychological and emotional symptoms, though these experiences are rarely examined in the different phases of the migraine cycle
- The Migraine Clinical Outcome Assessment System (MiCOAS) project is an FDA-funded project focused on integrating patient input into the development of clinical trial outcomes
- Input was gathered from people living with migraine via qualitative interviews on a range of topics including cognitive and physical functioning, ICHD-3 symptoms, and psychological and emotional symptoms. This presentation focuses on non-ICHD-3 migraine defining symptoms (other data are presented separately)

Methods

- Individuals with self-reported, medically-diagnosed migraine were recruited via announcements by the Coalition for Headache and Migraine Patients (CHAMP) for participation in semi-structured qualitative interviews
- Of N=428 individuals who responded to the study screener and were determined eligible, a sociodemographically diverse sample of 40 interview participants were selected for participation (Figure 1)

Figure 1. Flow chart of participant selection



- Participants were asked to describe their “typical” experience during migraine phases:
 - Pre-headache:** “the period of time between when your migraine attack begins up until the onset of your headache pain”
 - Headache:** “the period of time during your migraine attack when you experience headache pain”
 - Post-headache:** “the period immediately after your headache pain subsides”
 - Interictal/between attacks:** “the time period in-between your migraine attacks”

Results

Participant Characteristics

- Participants ranged from 21-70 years old, 77.5% were female, 67.5% were White, 22.5% Black, 10% American Indian or Alaskan Native, 7.5% Asian and 7.5% other/prefer not to answer. 22.5% were Hispanic. 55.0% were employed
- All participants currently used acute treatment(s) and 87.5% currently used preventive therapy for migraine

ICHD-3 Symptoms

Pre-headache

- Light sensitivity was most common symptom reported (75%)
- Nausea (62.5%) and sound sensitivity (60%) was also reported by over half of participants
- Aura (32.5%) and aura-associated symptoms (numbness [30%], pins and needles [27.5%], vision loss [12.5%]) were more common during pre-headache than other phases

Headache

- Headache pain was reported by all participants
- Light sensitivity (80%), nausea (62.5%) and sound sensitivity (60%) persisted from pre-headache phase

Post-headache

- As with pre-headache, light sensitivity was most common symptom (30%)
- Sound sensitivity (25%), head pain, and nausea (both 15%) also persisted to a lesser degree

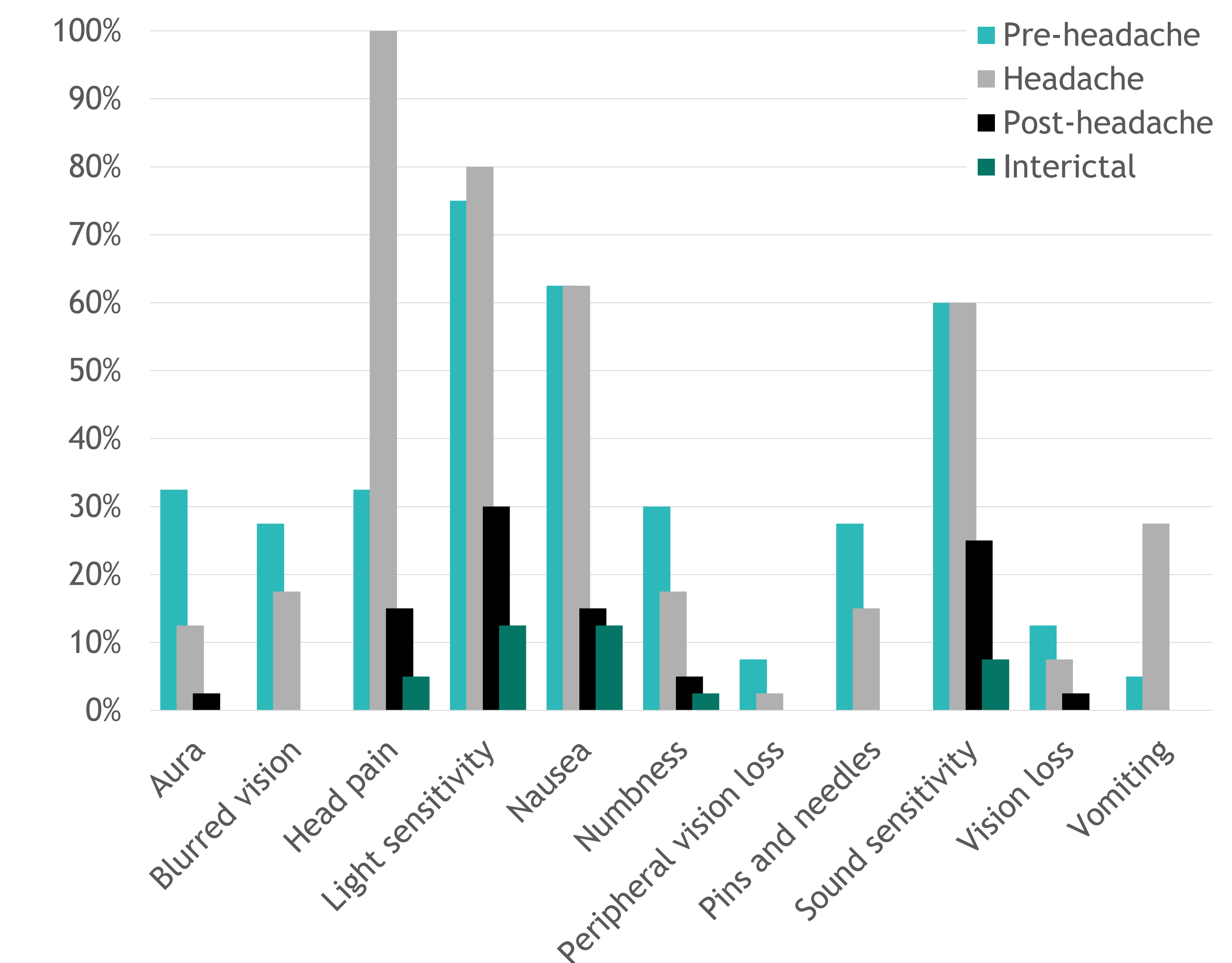
Interictal/between attacks

- Light sensitivity and nausea were most common symptoms (12.5%)
- Sound sensitivity (7.5%) and head pain (5%) were also present for some participants

Changes in ICHD-3 symptoms over phases with sample quotes

- Photo- and phonophobia and nausea were reported by some to begin during the pre-headache phase and increase in intensity during the headache phase
- “It’s just like if you were to sit down in front of a stereo...the volume...you just cranked that to 11, if that was the symptom. So two being this is what I’m experiencing leading into it, and then you just turn that dial all the way up or push that button all the way up. It’s just - you’re just amplifying it.”*
- Other symptoms were reported to become less noticeable in the context of increasing head pain. There was an Attentional shift of focus to head pain and a reduced ability to attend to other symptoms
- “Well, the hot flashes seem to dissipate. The aura, if I did have an aura, that takes its 20 or 30 minutes, and that dissipates. If I have nausea, it’s usually not too bad. Like I don’t vomit or anything. So I guess I would say they kind of dissipate once the pain takes hold.”*

Figure 2. ICHD-3 migraine symptoms reported by participants by phase (N=40)



Conclusions

- Frequency of ICHD-3 migraine defining symptoms differed between phases of the migraine cycle including between attacks
- Head pain during the headache phase was the only universally-reported symptom
- Many of the ICHD-3 migraine defining symptoms of migraine occurred with similar frequencies in the pre-headache and headache phases
- Efforts to understand the burden of migraine should consider symptom profiles by stage and the links between symptoms and functional status. Focusing solely on the headache phase likely misses important aspects of ictal and interictal burden

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