



Do Weather Changes Trigger Migraine Headache?

Do weather changes trigger Migraines?

Many people with migraine think they do. Although to date, most scientific studies have been unable to show a clear link between weather patterns and migraine. A study from Vienna, Austria, that included 238 patients concluded, "The influence of weather factors on migraine and headache is small and questionable..."

Other studies have shown differently:

- An American study found that some people with migraine appear to be sensitive to changes in temperature and humidity, while another American study found that higher temperatures increased the number of patients with migraine who went to the Emergency Room with headache.
- Barometric pressure may be another factor. One study looked at whether falling barometric pressure seemed to trigger headaches during a time when a typhoon hit Japan.
 - It found that 75% of people with migraine had migraine attacks associated with the drop in barometric pressure.
 - While only 20% of people with tension-type headache experienced an attack.
- The amount of sunshine may also be a factor.
 - An Austrian study found sunshine for more than 3 hours a day increased the possibility of a migraine.
 - A Norwegian study found that migraines were more likely during the long summer days in the Arctic.
- A study was performed involving the Chinook winds, a powerful weather system in Western Canada.
 - Some migraineurs were migraine sensitive the day before the Chinook wind started; at a time when barometric pressure was falling.
 - Others tended to have more migraines the next day, when the wind was blowing; although this increased risk was only present if the wind was quite strong.
 - Even though both groups were Chinook sensitive, there seemed to be two different ways in which this weather system could trigger migraines.

Every person with migraine likely has a unique set of triggers which may include stress, certain foods, alcohol, and other factors. In the same way, some people with migraine are likely sensitive to one weather factor, and others are sensitive to other factors. Many different weather patterns have been found in different research studies to increase the chances of having a migraine attack in some people, but not in others. Just exactly how and why these weather patterns cause migraine events in each individual migraineur is not known.