

New daily persistent headache is a secondary disorder--no

R. Weeks

Behavioral Medicine, New England Institute for Neurology and Headache, USA

New Daily Persistent Headache (NDPH) is an uncommon and under-recognized Primary Headache disorder. Its clinical presentation may resemble migraine or tension-type headaches but a distinguishing feature of NDPH is a majority of patients can pinpoint the exact date of onset of symptoms. Head pain is daily from onset. As its phenotypic presentation is quite heterogeneous, some clinicians and researchers to refer to NDPH as a syndrome versus a distinct disorder. Though a great deal of research has targeted the discovery of an underlying etiology, a review of the literature suggests that over half of these patients cannot identify any underlying biological or behavioral antecedent. Most patients go through an extensive neurological/medical work-up looking for a causal link. The usually negative work-up can be quite frustrating to the patient and the clinician. The ICHD-3 Beta lists NDPH in the Primary Headache disorder classification section. It is listed as NDPH 4.10 along with "Other Primary Headache Disorders". There is a chapter on Secondary Headaches, and the coding rules state that "when a new headache occurs for the first time in close temporal relation to another disorder that is known to cause headache, or fulfills other criteria for causation of that disorder, the new headache is coded as a Secondary Headache attributed to the causative disorder." This presentation will briefly describe NDPH, review the relevant literature regarding antecedent factors, and underscore how the application of the current classification rules makes NDPH a Primary Headache disorder. Hence, NDPH is NOT a Secondary Headache disorder.