

Assessment of occupation in Korean cluster headache

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Cluster headache (CH) is a neurological disorder characterized by recurrent, severe headaches on one side of the head. The previous studies have shown that CH has a significant negative impact on quality of life. Although there are many studies on overall quality of life, studies on occupations in CH have not been investigated. The study was conducted in 17 headache clinics for patients diagnosed with CH. The control group consisted of patients with non-cluster headache such as migraine or tension-type headache or healthy adults. Unemployed, students, and housewives were excluded. Occupational group, work behavior and working time were also assessed. Survey of work experience and satisfaction with current job due to CH was investigated. A questionnaire was administered to 71 CH patients and 68 control subjects. Except for the unemployed, housewives, and students, the occupational evaluations were conducted for 57 subjects in each group. In the control group, 52 employees were employed whereas in the CH group only 37 employees were employed. The remaining 18 were either employers or freelancers. Fifty CH patients (87%) experienced job loss, lack of performance, voluntary resignation, and promotion disadvantage at work. However, only 26 of the control group (46%) had these experiences. Despite disadvantages in the occupation, job satisfaction was mostly above average. This study confirms that CH results in a decrease in the overall work life of patients. There is a need to improve the quality of life in the workplace by treating headache with active acute care and adequate preventive treatment.