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# The City of London Migraine Clinic Newsletter

## JUNE 2011

Work has finally started on our unpleasant, smelly basement. We were forced to close for the first week of this month during the disruptive phase and we apologise for any inconvenience that this may have caused to those trying to contact us. We look forward to updating you next month of the results and our plans for the future (funds permitting). In this edition we are asking for your help in the form of expertise to secure the future of the clinic. Please get in touch if you think that you can share your skills with us. Also this month, we explore the extent of the problem of migraine as explained by the World Health Organisation in their latest report aimed at world leaders. We hope it makes governments the world over sit up and recognise the problem and invest the time and money that I am sure you will agree the conditions deserve.

### Contents

1. Urgent! IT Experts Required
2. Atlas of Headache Disorders - World Health Organisation Report Summary
3. Thank you
4. Research
5. Can You Help Test a Migraine Diary?
6. London Medical Orchestra Concert
7. Poem: The Headache

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### 1. URGENT! IT EXPERTS REQUIRED

With our limited staffing we often lack specific expertise and call upon our supporters for their help. It is a great way for you to do your bit for the clinic, especially if you are unable financially to help, your skills may be just as valuable. This month the need is greater than ever...

## **Are you experienced in 'Search Engine Optimisation and able to drive traffic to our site?**

We have noticed a significant drop in visitors to our website which we really need your help with. We rely upon our website heavily as it is the main way in which people find out about us. There are many people out there for whose lives the clinic could make a real difference for, yet do not even know that we exist because we are not found easily via online search engines. We need to ensure that appointments are booked to full capacity to be able to cover basic running costs and without people referring online, demand is falling. We want to rectify the problem before it starts to affect the financial viability of the service that we offer, as despite our own efforts to keep content fresh and effective for search engines we lack in-depth knowledge. Please get in touch as soon as possible if you are able to offer advice in any way.



## **Mobile Phone Application Creators**

We hope to develop our very own phone 'app' to respond to the growing trend of smart phone ownership in a competitive market. It is important that we move with the times to ensure that we keep in touch with our target group for whom the majority are young professionals using this technology. This is completely new territory for us, which is why we are asking for your help.

**If you have expertise in either one of these areas and could advise us, please email: [rebecca.sterry@migraineclinic.org.uk](mailto:rebecca.sterry@migraineclinic.org.uk) or call 0207 251 3322. Thank you.**

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## **2. Atlas of Headache Disorders –a summary of the report by the World Health Organisation, May '11**

This global enquiry into the worldwide neglect of the major public-health problem of headache disorders presents data acquired by WHO in collaboration with *Lifting The Burden: the Global Campaign against Headache*. Most of the information was collected in a questionnaire survey of neurologists, general practitioners and patients' representatives from 101 countries.

The report sums up the main problems including lack of correct diagnosis, treatment, education, funding and research. It recognises what is too often made aware to us at the clinic, that despite headache disorders being prevalent and disabling, they are still under-recognized, under-diagnosed and under-treated, with only a minority of people with

headache disorders being professionally diagnosed. It also explores the huge divide in treatment between high income and low income countries.

Despite there being a range of efficient drugs for headache, countries in all income



categories identify non-availability of appropriate medication as a barrier to best management. In terms of education the report points out that worldwide, only four hours are committed to headache disorders in formal undergraduate medical training. Around 50% of people with headache are primarily self-treating, without contact with health professionals, which reveals the lack of confidence within the general public.

One of the main points that the report highlights is that these are illnesses that, in the majority of cases, could be easily relieved. If they are not however headaches can unnecessarily become a huge burden, both for the individual and for society as a whole with enormous financial costs through lost productivity.

As an incentive for decision makers the report goes on to look at the figures in great detail as to economic impact of the condition and reassures that given the very high indirect costs of headache, greater investment in health care that treats headache effectively is likely to be in many countries cost-saving overall.

To see the full report, visit:

[http://www.who.int/mental\\_health/management/who\\_atlas\\_headache\\_disorders.pdf](http://www.who.int/mental_health/management/who_atlas_headache_disorders.pdf)

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### 3. Thank you!

A big thank you to Fred Wilson who cycled a whopping 102 miles in aid of the Clinic to raise a huge total of £2902.50! His daughter Becky was a patient of ours and it is the positive impact that the clinic has had on her life that motivated her father to take part in the ride from Leicester to Norfolk. This is what Becky has to say about her experience with us on the Virgin Giving Fundraising page:

*“As a sufferer myself The Migraine Clinic has become a great resource over the past 5 years helping me to understand what exactly a migraine is, why I get them, how I can help prevent them and what medication is best.*

*“Going to the clinic every few months I feel as though I can manage them a lot better and am prepared for the onset of one .If one is to occur I am now able to prevent it from becoming a full blown migraine . Previously this would have left me in bed for 48 hours and a further 2 days to recover completely.When I go to the clinic I feel relaxed and not stupid for asking questions as the doctor will understand and have answers.”*



Fred: Saddle-sore but smiling!

## 4. Research

### New migraine device

We have some exciting new studies in the pipeline for which we hope to gain funding and the necessary approvals. In the autumn we hope to recruit as many of you as possible to test a new device to treat a migraine attack when it starts. We'll show you how to use the device and after you've treated migraine attacks at home, you come back and tell us how you got on. This is a groundbreaking study, so if you haven't already been in touch, make sure your name is on our research database. You will be the first to hear when we need people to take part!

### Naproxen to break the cycle of frequent migraine attacks

Has your City of London Migraine Clinic doctor recommended a six week course of treatment for you? Have you kept a migraine diary before, during and after the course of treatment? If so, Alison our Clinical Research Sister would be delighted to hear from you by email, to find out how the treatment worked for you.

We are running a study to investigate how effective this treatment is but need good migraine diary evidence. If you are currently following a naproxen course, you may be contacted by Alison or a colleague to see how you are doing and to remind you to bring your diaries to your follow-up visit.

### Help future generations of menstrual migraine sufferers

This study comparing the genetic profile of women with menstrual migraine those without could prove vital in finding the cure for these monthly cycles of headaches. Your daughters and theirs in the future could be spared these regular migraines if enough research is done. The simple study takes less than half an hour and just involves coming to the Clinic to complete a questionnaire and saliva sample. We are moving towards our target of 600 women but WE STILL NEED BOTH MIGRAINEURS AND NON SUFFERERS TO TAKE PART!

- **Menstrual migraineurs:** We know you are out there! We do need to see three months of diaries showing migraine and periods to be able to include you but they can be historical. If you need to start a diary, they are on our website.
- **Women without migraine:** Please ask your partners, friends and work colleagues to volunteer. If your place of work approves, and a group of female staff are able to participate, we may be able to arrange to come and visit you during a lunch break.

If you can help with our studies or just wish to register your name for future projects please contact Alison Frith via email at [research@migraineclinic.org.uk](mailto:research@migraineclinic.org.uk) or telephone the direct line on 020 7251 8094. Alison can provide more details and check your eligibility. Importantly, not all of our studies involve taking medication and there is never any obligation to take part in our research. Our care for you at the Clinic is not affected whether or not you choose to participate.

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## 5. Can you Help Test a Migraine Diary?

A patient of the clinic is looking for fellow migraine sufferers to help test a Migraine Diary developed as part of a postgraduate research project. If you are willing to give feedback on a one month trial of the diary, Lucy would be extremely grateful. She can be contacted at [lucykynge@gmail.com](mailto:lucykynge@gmail.com) Many thanks!



## 6. London Medical Orchestra Fundraising Concert

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2011 6pm

Venue: St Mary Brookfield,  
Dartmouth Park, London NW5 1SL



As mentioned in last month's edition we hope to see you at this event in aid of the clinic and in memory of our late Medical Director Dr. Nat Blau. All profits raised from ticket sales will be donated to the clinic.

RAFFLE PRIZES NEEDED! We were hoping that we would have some prizes to raffle off at this event but are yet to have any donated. We would be grateful for anything, however small, that you are able to give. Please reply to find out more information about the event or to offer raffle prizes.

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## 7. Poem

We will finish with a poem that I think some of you may be able to relate to written by Jill Hunt about her experiences of battling with headaches. I would like to thank her for allowing us to use this in our newsletter:

### The Headache

I took a trip to Nurofen  
Near Aspirin-by-Sea  
And all along my journey  
There were many sights  
To see  
Like Anadin and Panadol  
Two lovely seaside towns  
And a place called Alka Seltzer  
Nestling in the Downs  
We bypassed Paracetamol  
And took the road  
Through Vick  
It was quiet in Mentholatum  
So we got through  
Pretty quick  
I saw the oil rigs near Hedex  
Just past Solphadine  
And because of all its  
Olbas oil  
It's twinned with Aberdeen  
But now I'm safely  
Home again  
I'm tired for goodness sake  
I've got a splitting headache  
But I don't know what to take

