# World Brain Day takes on the ‘Painful Truth’ about Migraine in 2019

## On July 22, the World Federation of Neurology is dedicated to sharing powerful information about the most common brain disease in the world—migraine.

***London, United Kingdom: July 2019*** – On July 22, the World Federation of Neurology (WFN) is partnering with the International Headache Society (IHS) to support the highly anticipated 5th Annual World Brain Day. This year, World Brain Day is dedicated to raising awareness for the most common brain disease in the world—migraine. Through this initiative, we are working alongside more than 120 organizations worldwide, to stop the stigma and build awareness around migraine.

**Migraine is More than Just a Headache**

“Migraine affects one in seven people and, together with other headache disorders, is one of the leading causes of disability worldwide,” explained Prof. Tissa Wijeratne, World Brain Day Chair.

“Lack of research support for, and publications in the field of migraine from low to middle-income countries is disappointing and alarming. This is where nearly two-thirds of the world’s population live. The situation in high-income countries is still in tremendous need of progress.”

Despite its pervasive impact, migraine continues to be vastly under-recognized, underdiagnosed and under-treated. Due to a lack of education in headache medicine, it’s not uncommon for health care providers to lack the tools necessary to diagnose and effectively treat patients. As a result, the majority of sufferers are not receiving the help they need.

“Migraine receives less research funding than all of the world’s most burdensome diseases,” said Prof. Wolfgang Grisold, the WFN’s Secretary-General. “Driving awareness will help the scientific community to more effectively advocate on behalf of this vast population of patients in need.”

Migraine is a disabling neurological disease. It is characterized by severe head pain, cognitive impairment, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, vertigo, and sensitivity to light, sound, and touch. It is also highly associated with other diseases such as stroke, heart disease, epilepsy, depression, chronic pain, among others. In order to help patients find relief and improve their quality of life, early diagnosis and access to effective treatment are vital.

“Providing patients with appropriate, evidence-based care would dramatically move the needle on the global burden of migraine,” says Wijeratne. “There is a need for improved standards of care, so that all can access safe treatment regardless of financial situation, gender, culture or location.”

**The Painful Truth About Migraine**

The key to driving improvements in migraine care is spreading awareness. This year, World Brain Day is taking to social media to ask people all over the world to share their Painful Truth about migraine using the hashtags #worldbrainday and #thepainfultruth.

Throughout June and July, we are asking patients from around the world to share ‘The Painful Truth’ about migraine on social media. By encouraging people to speak up, we hope to elevate the patient voice and bring visibility to an invisible illness.

Patients, health care professionals, advocates and caregivers are all encouraged to also attend the World Brain Day webinar that will take place on in July to share more information about migraine. During the 60-minute presentation, key migraine experts from around the world will offer vital insights on the disease, as well as outline a strategy to raise the bar on patient care regardless of age, gender, culture or location.

**Partnering to Influence Change**

To help ensure that this is one of the most impactful World Brain Days to date, WFN is partnering with national neurology associations, leading migraine and headache organizations around the world to share the message.

“The concerted actions of professionals and patient advocacy will help in providing the best therapies available to the many,” says International Headache Society President Lars Edvinsson. “There is a new class of effective and specific prophylactic medications directed toward the CGRP system that are already on the market and showing good responses. With further novel specific therapies on the way, the time to make a difference is right now.”

Additionally, World Brain Day will be broadly promoted alongside the American Migraine Foundation (AMF) in a prominent ad displayed in New York’s Times Square during Migraine and Headache Awareness Month in June.

“Nearly 380,000 pedestrians enter Times Square daily, hailing from all corners of the world,” said David Dodick, MD, Professor of Neurology at Mayo Clinic, Chair of the American Migraine Foundation and Immediate Past-President of the International Headache Society. There is no better place to spread the word about a disease that knows no borders than one of the world’s most international locations.”

The annual World Brain Day takes place on July 22 and is devoted to a different topic each year. The choice of date was no coincidence: the WFN was founded on July 22, 1957. It’s only fitting that WFN recognizes its 62nd year of action by focusing its efforts on fighting a problem as pervasive and debilitating as migraine.

“It’s imperative that the world understands the physical pain and societal impact of migraine,” said WFN President Prof. William Carroll. “The World Federation of Neurology stands beside the more than one billion people living with migraine.”

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