

## Migraine Disease is More Common Than You Think

- Migraine disease is very common – in fact, **twenty percent of Americans will experience migraine during their lifetime.**
- Migraine **disproportionately and dramatically impacts women of working age**, affecting roughly one in four women in their lives, making it one of the most common diseases facing women at work.
- Despite the prevalence of migraine, lack of education among employers often leads to unintended stigma in the workplace. **Because of this stigma associated with the disease, those living with migraine often do their best to hide their condition in the workplace, which leads to under-reporting.**
- **Americans in their prime working years are most impacted by migraine disease.** People 18-45 years old are most likely to experience the condition.

# MIGRAINE AT WORK

## About Us

*Migraine at Work* is a project of the World Health Education Organization. Our steering committee includes leaders from MigraineAgain.com, the Headache and Migraine Policy Forum, the National Headache Foundation, and Dr. Robert Shapiro, MD, PhD.

Migraine disease is a chronic and often debilitating condition affecting 1 in 4 women and 1 in 16 men in general. Absenteeism, lost productivity, and turnover from migraine are often hidden, but impact the bottom line of companies across the country.

Together, we're educating executives and HR personnel about the workplace needs of individuals experiencing migraine and giving employers and employees the tools they need to build healthier, happier and more productive workplaces.

For more insights and resources, visit [MigraineAtWork.org](https://MigraineAtWork.org).

# MIGRAINE AT WORK



## Employer Guide



*How to understand and support employees with migraine*

## Migraine Disease Can Impact Your Workplace

- **Migraine can be debilitating** – more than 90% of people with migraine are unable to work or function normally during their migraine.
- **Migraine and severe headaches are the second leading cause of presenteeism costs** – which may result in a 25% reduction in workplace productivity.



- **Lack of proper care and treatment can lead to downstream economic and medical consequences**, putting individuals at higher risk of depression, anxiety, and chronic diseases.
- **Helping employees manage their migraine** can not only improve their quality of life, **it can also improve their productivity on the job** and their value to employers.

## Common Workplace Triggers for Migraine



Did you know that something as simple as flickering lights or strong fragrances can trigger a migraine attack? Most workplaces aim to create atmospheres that promote productivity and satisfaction. But, what most employers don't know is that many environments can adversely impact people with migraine, increasing the severity of their disease.

### These are commonly overlooked migraine triggers in the workplace:

- Bright, flickering, non-adjustable lighting
- Strong odors, such as perfumes or cleaning supplies
- Excessive or repetitive noises
- Computer screen glare
- Rigid schedules and deadlines

## Steps to Make Your Workplace More Migraine-Friendly

- ✓ Limit noise levels and provide adjustable lighting (cubicle shades are a popular alternative)
- ✓ Install anti-glare filters on computer screens and/or provide tinted eyeglasses for photophobia
- ✓ Promote a fragrance-free environment and consider alternative cleaning supplies (limiting scents and odors)
- ✓ Set aside a dark, quiet space for employees to use should they experience a migraine attack
- ✓ Consider a flexible schedule for employees experiencing migraine

Migraine, just like other chronic illnesses, does not impact all people in the same manner. **Not all people have the same triggers and some may need additional accommodations** to ensure they have a safe and healthy work environment. These steps can improve productivity, lower turnover and lead to happier employees.

*Interested in learning more about making positive change within your workplace?*

Send us an email at [contact@migraineatwork.org](mailto:contact@migraineatwork.org) and register for our newsletter at [migraineatwork.org](http://migraineatwork.org)