

Hemicrania continua (HC) is a rare form of chronic headache that is usually continuous, with fluctuating pain intensity. It is typically felt on one side of the head and often involves pain around the eye. HC is considered a primary headache disorder, meaning that it is not usually caused by an underlying medical condition.

The diagnosis is made through thorough history taking and examination. Investigations such as a brain scan can help exclude a secondary cause for this condition, although this is uncommon.

The cause of HC is not well understood. However, it is believed to be related to dysfunction in the central nervous system, specifically in the region of the hypothalamus.

HC is characterized by a continuous, unilateral headache that is typically moderate to severe in intensity. It is often accompanied by autonomic symptoms, such as tearing, nasal congestion, and redness or drooping of the eye. The pain may worsen in response to movement, such as bending over, and may also be exacerbated by alcohol consumption.

The primary treatment for HC is indomethacin, a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug. In most cases, indomethacin provides complete relief of symptoms. However, some individuals may experience adverse effects such as stomach upset or kidney problems, and may require close monitoring.

Other medications that may be used to treat HC include celecoxib, topiramate, lamotrigine, and gabapentin. In some cases, nerve blocks or other types of injections may be recommended.

HC can be a challenging condition to manage, and it may require ongoing treatment to control symptoms. It is important to work closely with a healthcare provider to develop an individualized treatment plan that addresses the specific needs of each patient. It may also be helpful to keep a headache diary to track symptoms and identify triggers that may exacerbate the condition.

If you or a loved one are experiencing symptoms of HC, it is important to seek medical attention. While this condition can be difficult to manage, there are treatment options available that can help improve quality of life and reduce pain and discomfort.