

Patient Perspective

When SCAD patients meet another survivor in person, it often feels like we've known each other forever. It's the stories and experiences we share that bond us, especially the trauma of an unexpected heart attack striking when all seemed well in our lives. We become detectives of our own health, trying to discover the "why" of SCAD.

Migraine headache is a common topic among SCAD patients. Some of us have lived with headaches as a debilitating and accepted part of our lives since youth. Growing up we were told the pain is "just part of being a girl..." or "it's your hormones." Why is it, we ponder online and when we meet, that many SCAD survivors have a history of migraine?

My own experience with headaches began at age 10 with an ocular migraine. I was prescribed cafergot, which was awful. By age 13, I began the painful cycle of menstrual migraines and was switched to fioricet. As a busy teen pushing through pre-menstrual syndrome each month, it was hard to catch the right timing for the medicine to help. Ultimately, I was even given contraceptive pills to try to time my cycle and control the migraines. In my late-20s, I found some relief through Imitrex nasal spray. And in my mid-30s when I had babies -- despite what I'd been promised by many -- my migraines didn't go away...I had a heart attack instead!

This type of migraine journey is one I've heard other SCAD patients tell, and on their behalf, I express sincere gratitude to the many researchers, clinical coordinators, and

statisticians who have put their hearts and souls into the iSCAD Registry. We are hopeful this new data on migraine and SCAD will lead to relief and prevention for all patients.

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