# Stroke warning: Migraine sufferers at greater risk of DEADLY episode

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### MIGRAINES could be an indicator people are more likely to suffer from a stroke - caused by loss of blood flow to the brain.

Experts have revealed patients who have surgery who commonly suffer with migraines are more likely to be affected around the time of their operation, than people who don’t experience migraines.

A migraine is usually a moderate or severe headache felt as a throbbing pain on one side of the head.

Many people also have symptoms such as nausea, vomiting and increased sensitivity to light or sound.

There are different types of migraine, but experts said migraines with aura, where there are specific warning signs such as flashing lights just before the migraine begins, are the most likely to be linked to greater risk of [stroke](http://www.express.co.uk/life-style/health/710895/alcohol-risks-heart-glass-of-wine-atrial-fibrilation-study).

Researchers at Harvard Medical School in the US said migraines should be factored in when surgeons are assessing a patient's risk of stroke.

The study, published in the British Medical Journal, examined data on 124,558 surgical patients at Massachusetts General Hospital and two affiliated community hospitals between January 2007 and August 2014.

Around 10,000 were known to suffer from migraines - 12.6 per cent of whom suffered migraines with aura.

Out of the 124,558 patients, 771 strokes occurred.

The researchers found that patients with migraines were at increased risk of stroke around the time of surgery.

They said 2.4 strokes would be seen for every 1,000 surgical patients.

This risk increased to 4.3 for every 1,000 patients with migraine diagnosis - 3.9 for migraine without aura, and 6.3 for migraine with aura.

They also found that patients who suffered from migraines were more likely to be readmitted to hospital.

"Given the high prevalence of migraine in the general population, the migraine-perioperative ischemic stroke association carries public health importance," they wrote.

"Physicians should be aware of this increased perioperative risk, particularly in patients with migraine who present without traditional risk factors for stroke."

Strokes are a medical emergency and urgent treatment is essential.

NHS Choices said the exact cause of migraines is unknown, but health professionals believe they are the result of abnormal brain activity temporarily affecting nerve signals, chemicals and blood vessels in the brain.