# **Stroke risk for migraine sufferers**

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Surgery patients who suffer from migraines are more likely to have a stroke around the time of their operation, a study has suggested.

The risk is higher among patients who suffer migraines "with aura" – warning signs such as seeing flashing lights.

Experts at Harvard Medical School in the US say 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 1000 surgical patients.

This risk increased to 4.3 for every 1000 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."