

## PERSISTENT POST-COVID 19 HEADACHE: RESULTS OF A NATIONAL SURVEY

**Gabriela Nacu<sup>1,2</sup>, Oxana Grosu<sup>1,3</sup>, Galina Corcea<sup>3</sup>, Stela Odobescu<sup>3</sup>, Ion Moldovanu<sup>3</sup>.**

<sup>1</sup> Cerebrovascular Diseases and Neurorehabilitation Research unit, Diomid Gherman Institute of Neurology and Neurosurgery, Chişinău, Republic of Moldova.

<sup>2</sup> Department of Neurology nr.1, Nicolae Testemitanu State University of medicine and Pharmacy, Chişinău, Republic of Moldova.

<sup>3</sup> Functional Neurology Research unit, Diomid Gherman Institute of Neurology and Neurosurgery, Chişinău, Republic of Moldova.

### Introduction

According to the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), post-COVID-19 syndrome refers to a multisystemic affection with symptoms lasting more than 12 weeks after the onset of acute disease. Persistent headache, with a prevalence of 18%, seems to be the fifth most common symptom in patients with the so-called long COVID syndrome, which is characterized by “brain fog” with cognitive disturbances, fatigue, dyspnea, myalgia and muscle weakness, depression. The burden, characteristics, pathophysiology and management of long COVID headache are not completely understood.

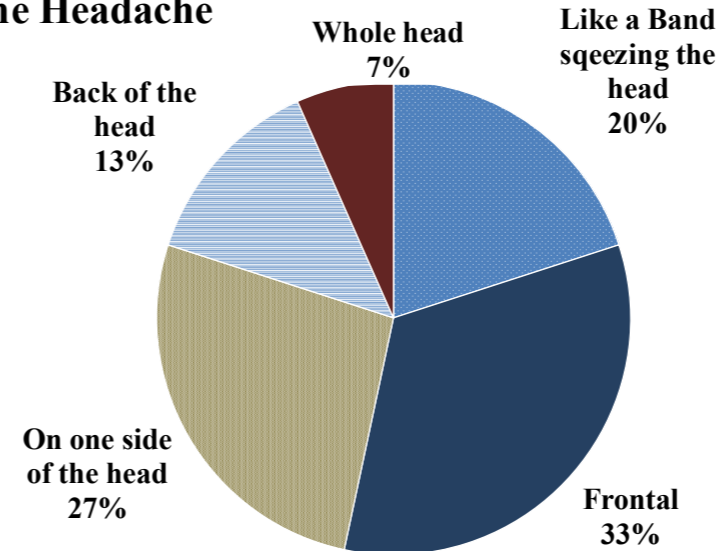
### Purpose

To evaluate clinical phenotype of post-Covid 19 persistent headache in patients with acute headache history during the acute period of Covid 19 infection (study published in BAMS 2021).

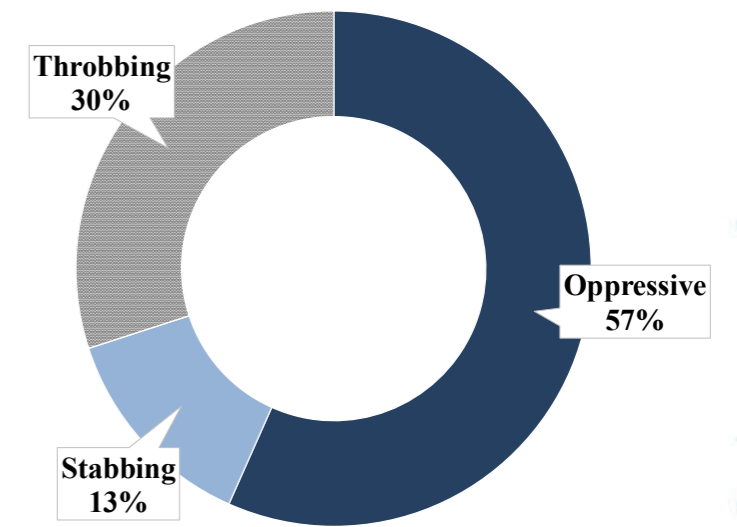
### Material and methods

This study is a survey. People, previously involved in the national survey of Headache in the context of the COVID 19 pandemic (conducted for 3 months in 2021), were asked to complete online a structured questionnaire. These patients had been tested serologically Covid 19 positive for the first time- more than 9 months ago.

### Topography of the Headache



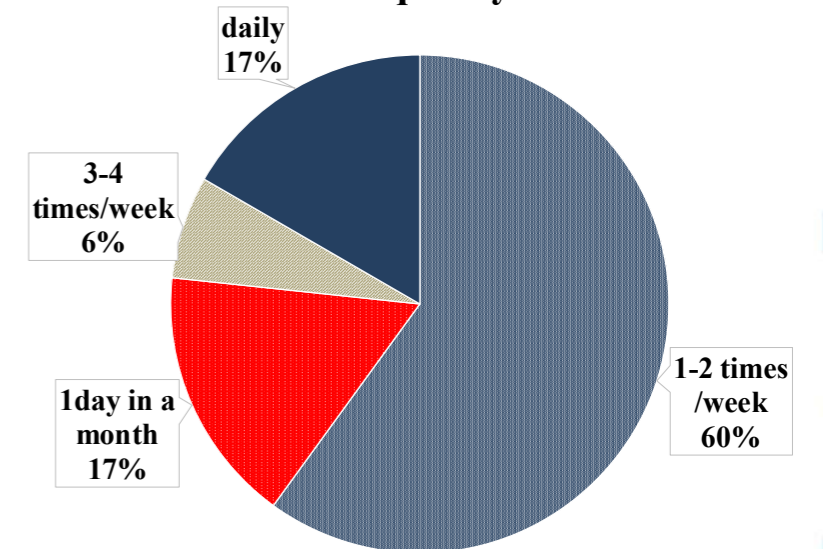
### Quality of Headache



### Results

From 140 people previously involved in the study "Headache in the context of COVID 19 pandemic - the results of a national survey", 89 patients completed the questionnaire about the persistence of post-Covid 19 headache, from which 30 people (33.7%) mentioned the persistence of headache after recovery. Mostly, we observed a moderate-severe intensity of the headache, which was localized in 33.3% (10p) in frontal region, with a predominantly oppressive character in 56.7% cases. In 60% cases, patients have experienced 1-2 times/week headache using in  $5.3 \pm 4.74$  days/month (min 0.0; max 15.0) drug treatment.

### Frequency of the Headache



### Conclusions

The headache is a disabling symptom of Covid 19 infection that persists even after recovery, it is clinically manifested by severe, moderate-severe pain affecting young women, a clinical feature highlighted in other previous studies.

### Keywords

headache, post Covid-19, chronic