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Migraine prevention in children and adolescents: results of an open study with a special butterbur root extract

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PMID: 15836592 DOI: [10.1111/j.1526-4610.2005.05044.x](#)

Abstract

Objective: To explore the role of a special butterbur root extract for migraine prevention in children and adolescents with severe migraines.

Background: Two randomized and placebo-controlled trials with a total of 289 migraine patients have demonstrated the efficacy and safety of a special butterbur root extract in the reduction of migraine attacks in adults. We studied whether butterbur had the potential as an efficient and well-tolerated migraine preventive in children and adolescents.

Design/methods: 108 children and adolescents between the ages of 6 and 17 were included in a multicenter prospective open-label study. Participants suffered from migraines diagnosed according to IHS classifications for at least 1 year. Patients were treated with 50 to 150 mg of the butterbur root extract depending on age for a period of 4 months. Treatment progression was recorded in migraine journals especially designed for children and adolescents.

Results: 77% of all patients reported a reduction in the frequency of migraine attacks of at least 50%. Attack frequency was reduced by 63%. 91% of patients felt substantially or at least slightly improved after 4 months of treatment. About 90% of each, doctors and patients, reported well-being or even improved well-being. Undesired effects (7.4%) included mostly eructation. No serious adverse events occurred and no adverse event caused a premature termination.

Conclusions: The results and low rate of adverse events in this open prospective migraine prevention study in children and adolescents are similar to the results of two multicenter placebo-controlled butterbur studies in adults. Butterbur root extract shows a potential as an effective and well-tolerated migraine prophylaxis also for children and teenagers.

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Fox AW.

Headache. 2005 Sep;45(8):1090-1; author reply 1091. doi: 10.1111/j.1526-4610.2005.05195_3.x.

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