

MENSTRUAL MIGRAINE

The hormone-linked headache many dread

STAR HEALTH DESK

Menstrual migraine is a form of migraine that follows a monthly pattern, appearing shortly before or during a period. It is not simply a bad headache. Attacks can involve intense, pulsing pain, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, and strong sensitivity to light, sound, or smells. For some, daily routines become almost impossible until the episode passes.

The main driver is thought to be hormonal change, particularly the sharp fall in oestrogen that happens just as menstruation begins. This shift can affect chemical pathways in the brain that control pain, making certain people especially prone to migraines at this time of the cycle. Those who already experience migraine for other reasons often notice that their worst attacks cluster around their period.

One feature of menstrual migraine is its predictability. Because it tends to strike at similar points each month, keeping track of cycle dates and symptoms can be extremely useful. This



record can help people and their doctors anticipate attacks rather than simply reacting once pain has started.

Management usually combines lifestyle habits with medication. Eating regularly, staying hydrated, keeping sleep patterns steady, and reducing stress around high-risk days may lessen severity. Some take pain-relieving or migraine-specific medicines at the first sign of symptoms, or even just before attacks are expected. In certain cases, hormonal approaches are used to smooth fluctuations.

Although menstrual migraine can feel relentless, understanding the pattern is a powerful first step. With tailored treatment and planning, many people find they can reduce disruption and regain control of their month.



WORLD LEPROSY DAY 2026

Time to put an end to stigma as disease remains curable

STAR HEALTH DESK

Every year, on the last Sunday of January, the world observes World Leprosy Day. In 2026, this falls on today, 25th January. This day is an opportunity to raise awareness about leprosy, remind the global community that it still affects people today, and to confront the stigma and discrimination that too often surround the disease.

This year's theme – “*Leprosy is curable; the real challenge is stigma*” – is a direct call to action aimed at increasing public understanding of the disease, confronting harmful stereotypes, and encouraging communities worldwide to support those affected. Although effective and free antibiotic treatment is available that cures leprosy and prevents complications if started early, negative attitudes and fear still prevent many people from seeking care promptly.

According to World Health Organisation (WHO), World Leprosy Day 2026 is an opportunity not only to raise awareness about the disease itself but also to celebrate the dignity and resilience of people living with leprosy and those who have

experienced it. The theme reflects evidence from communities where individuals affected consistently identify stigma as one of their most significant challenges. Many affected people face discrimination that affects nearly every aspect of their lives – including employment, housing, family relationships and education.

Stigma is rooted in widespread misconceptions. Too many people continue to believe that leprosy is highly contagious, incurable or even a punishment for wrongdoing – ideas that have no basis in science. In reality, leprosy is caused by a specific type of bacteria, and the disease is cured with simple antibiotic treatment. When treatment begins early, there are no lasting complications, and transmission is effectively interrupted. However, fear of discrimination often leads people to hide symptoms and avoid seeking medical help, resulting in delays that can cause unnecessary suffering and long-term disability.

World Leprosy Day also helps sustain momentum around global efforts to eliminate leprosy as a public health problem. Leprosy remains classified as a neglected tropical disease, and it persists in many regions

of the world. By spotlighting the lived experiences of affected individuals and by promoting accurate medical information, WHO and partner organisations aim to reduce new cases and eliminate social barriers that hinder disease control.

For communities and governments, the observance serves as a reminder that public health progress must go hand in hand with social change. Access to diagnosis and treatment alone is not enough if affected people continue to be ostracised, excluded or demeaned because of outdated beliefs. Addressing stigma requires education, respectful dialogue and inclusive policies that protect the rights and dignity of every individual.

The day's observance also forms part of larger advocacy efforts that link leprosy control with broader health and human rights goals. By mobilising civil society, health workers and policymakers, WHO aims to foster environments in which people affected by leprosy can live without fear of discrimination – and where communities are equipped with the knowledge to prevent stigma before it takes root.

Source: World Health Organisation

Five minutes that could change everything!

What if living longer did not mean gym memberships, fitness plans, or dramatic lifestyle overhauls? What if it simply meant moving a little more than you do now?

New research published in *The Lancet* suggests that even the smallest changes in daily movement can make a meaningful difference to how long people live. We are not talking about marathon running or intense workouts. Just a few extra minutes of walking each day—the kind most people could manage without thinking twice—may have a surprisingly powerful effect on overall health.

The message is simple and quietly encouraging: every bit of movement counts. For people who are already fairly active, doing just a little more still seems to help. But the biggest gains appear among those who move the least – the people who feel they are “too busy”, “too tired”, or “not the sporty type”. For them, even a modest increase can matter.

The study also highlights something many of us already know but often ignore: sitting for long stretches is not great for us. Cutting down on daily sitting time—by standing up more often, moving around the house, or taking short breaks—may also play a role in improving long-term health.

What makes this research stand out is that it challenges the idea that health benefits only come from hitting official targets or following strict rules. Instead, it points to a more realistic truth: small, achievable changes can still add up.

This is not about personal fitness advice or telling people what they must do. It is about shifting how we think. Movement does not have to be perfect to be powerful.

Sometimes, five extra minutes is enough to start changing the story.



Kidneys in silent mode: Early signs you should not ignore

ABIDA TASNIM

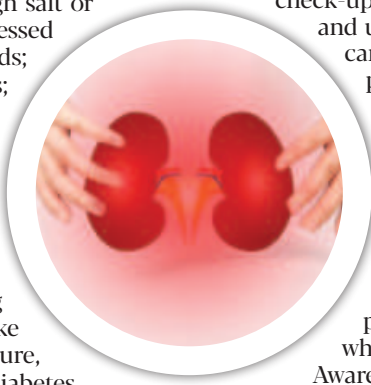
You wake up tired, sip your second cup of coffee, skip water again because of work-related deadlines or classes, and scroll through your phone while grabbing instant noodles or something greasy for breakfast. Feels like just another normal morning? Not for your proactive kidneys - they are burning out in silence. Most young adults and even older people rarely think about their kidneys unless something goes seriously wrong, and there comes the danger; kidney damage is often silent and slowly progressive. Unlike a sprained ankle or a fever, your kidneys will not send alerts urgently.

Our kidneys always work quietly – filtering our blood, balancing fluids, removing waste and regulating blood pressure. Beyond these jobs, the kidneys help to keep the electrolytes in balance – an essential process for normal functioning of the brain, heart, nerves and muscles. Ignoring subtle signals can quietly set a person on a path toward chronic kidney disease (CKD), increased strain on the heart, and life-altering outcomes like dialysis – an increasingly common health challenge today.

The early whispers are easy to ignore – mild swelling around the eyes or ankles, slightly foamy urine,

frequent or painful urination, unexplained fatigue, slight back pain, or recurrent headaches. Most people brush these off as stress, late nights, or too much caffeine, but these subtle signs are often your body's hints that the filtration system is under pressure.

The causes are frequently lifestyle-driven: chronic dehydration from skipping water; high salt or sugar diets; processed and fast foods; energy drinks; excessive use of over-the-counter painkillers like paracetamol or ibuprofen; and prolonged sitting or sedentary habits. Underlying conditions like high blood pressure, obesity, and diabetes can make it worse, silently accelerating kidney decline without any obvious warning. The stakes are high because kidneys are deeply interconnected to almost every vital system – when they cannot afford to function properly, the heart struggles, blood pressure increases, toxins build up, and even the brain can be affected. Yet, the empowering fact is that much of this damage is preventable or manageable if it can



be detected earlier.

Simple daily habits – which include drinking enough water, choosing balanced meals, getting exercise done for at least thirty minutes a day, avoiding unnecessary self-medications, and monitoring blood pressure regularly – can make a profound difference to reduce the risk of kidney diseases. Routine check-ups with simple blood and urine tests under the care of core healthcare providers can detect effects of kidney stress long before it becomes an irreversible serious issue. Kidneys don not shout – they whisper.

Unfortunately, most people only notice when it's too late. Awareness, small lifestyle changes, and paying attention to the subtle body signals can protect silent yet essential organs. Early detection and proper management of kidney disease play a crucial role in slowing down its progression and reducing life-threatening severe complications.

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The silent health threat many people carry alone

Loneliness is far more than an unpleasant feeling. New research suggests it is closely linked to depression and poorer physical health, marking it out as a growing public health concern in the United States.

By examining several years of nationwide telephone surveys, researchers found that feeling persistently lonely went hand in hand with far worse mental well-being and noticeably poorer physical health. People who described themselves as constantly lonely were far more likely to experience depression and to struggle through repeated days each month feeling mentally or physically unwell. Patterns also



varied across groups, with women generally reporting greater mental strain linked to loneliness, while some ethnic differences appeared in how strongly depression was connected to feeling isolated.

Although the study relied on people reporting their own experiences and could not account for every life circumstance, the message is clear: loneliness has tangible consequences for health. The

authors argue that it should be treated with the same seriousness as other major risk factors.

They suggest that doctors and health services could begin asking routinely about loneliness, helping to spot those at risk early and direct them towards social programmes or community support.

The wider implication is striking. Loneliness is not simply a private struggle; it may be shaping national health in quiet but powerful ways. Tackling isolation, the researchers conclude, could play a vital role in improving overall well-being and reducing depression across society.

Source: PLOS One

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সুস্থতায় কাটুক নতুন বছর

ইউনিভার্সেল মেডিকেল কলেজ হাসপাতাল ও
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সেবাসমূহ

- এডাল্ট আইসিইউ (বেডসাইড জায়ালাইসিসমহ)
- পেডিয়াট্রিক আইসিইউ (PICU)
- নবজাতক আইসিইউ (NICU)
- ইন্টারভেনশনাল কার্ডিওলজি
- কার্ডিয়াক সার্জারী
- হাই ডিপেন্ডেন্সি ইউনিট (HDU)
- রেসপাইরেটরি কেয়ার ইউনিট (RCU)
- ফিজিওথেরাপি ও স্ট্রোক সেন্টার
- হেমোডায়ালাইসিস ইউনিট
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- ডায়াগনস্টিক সেন্টার- ২৪ ঘন্টা
- জায়াবেটিস, হরমোন ও ওবেসিটি সেন্টার
- রিসেশনাল মরামশ (দিবা-রাত্রি)
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- ২৪ ঘন্টা মডেল ফার্মেসী

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