

WCHQ Health Insights

Migraine in Wisconsin | June 2026

Migraine impacts **12% of all adults** nationwide and headache disorders are the **third leading cause** of years lived with disability globally.



WHY THIS MATTERS

More than half of Wisconsin patients had healthcare visits for headaches before receiving a migraine diagnosis.

RETURN ON IMPROVEMENT

Improved management of migraine results in lower healthcare costs, fewer days of missed work, and better quality of life.

WHAT LAWMAKERS SHOULD KNOW



Progress

Health systems are prioritizing interventions to ensure access to specialty care.



Challenges

Neurologist shortages cause long wait times, and less than 1/3 migraine patients are seen in neurology annually.



Implication

Opportunities exist to strengthen primary care diagnosis, expand access to specialty expertise, and promote earlier treatment.

IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR PATIENTS WITH MIGRAINE



Goal: Improve the ability of primary care clinicians to diagnose and initiate treatment and connect patients with specialty care when appropriate.

**Expand
Primary Care
Capacity**

**Improve Access
to Specialty
Care**

**Optimize
Medication
Management**

**Reach
Underserved
Patients**

MIGRAINE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Improving Outcomes

Wisconsin health systems are:

- Implementing new **referral pathways and e-Consults** new to increase access to specialists when needed.
- Using **pharmacy-led medication management** to optimize treatment and support patients between visits.

Continued collaboration among primary care, specialty providers, employers, payers, and policymakers can help more patients begin effective treatment sooner and reduce the long-term burden of migraine.

ABOUT WCHQ

We are Wisconsin's leading electronic health record data hub, connecting over 80% of primary care providers statewide. We help care providers measure outcomes, identify improvement opportunities, and support statewide initiative that improve the health of Wisconsin residents.