



What are the symptoms of Cluster headache ?

What are the characteristics of the headache?

Cluster Headache attacks are characterised by excruciating strictly one-sided headache.

The attacks can change sides

What are the non-headache symptoms?

The attacks are accompanied by one sided “autonomic” features which most commonly include tearing from the eye, redness of the eye, running from the nose, nasal blockage, drooping or swelling of the eyelid.

One of the most distinguishing features during the cluster attack is restlessness.

People typically have to walk up and down, or rock to and fro, clutching the affected side, unlike people with migraine who are motion-sensitive and prefer to remain still.

In between attacks of pain people can experience a background dull ache in the same distribution of the cluster attacks.

During an active cluster bout some patients can be exquisitely sensitive to alcohol triggering an attack, usually within an hour.

How long do attacks last?

Attack duration is usually between 15 minutes to 3 hours and attack frequency 1-2 a day.

Cluster attacks can also wake people *from* sleep, usually about 1.5-2 hours after they have fallen asleep

Some people can exclusively have nocturnal attacks.

Cluster headache can be episodic or chronic.

Episodic cluster bouts usually last between 2 weeks and 3 months and then there is a remission period.

Cluster bouts tend to occur once every 1-2 years.

10 - 20% of sufferers experience chronic cluster headache, where attacks continue without a remission period

Active bouts of cluster headache can be seasonal and at the same time each year.

During an active bout, sufferers can experience attacks at set times during the day for weeks or months.