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Perception of Breakthrough Pain in Patients with Chronic Painful Conditions

L. T. Pizzi

Thomas Jefferson University, laura.pizzi@jefferson.edu

S. P. Lee

Thomas Jefferson University

D. Richardson

Thomas Jefferson University

N. Cobb

Thomas Jefferson University

B. Leas

*Thomas Jefferson University**See next page for additional authors*

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Authors

L. T. Pizzi, S. P. Lee, D. Richardson, N. Cobb, B. Leas, R. Toner, V. Pracilio, S. K. Ballas, A. Ashkenazi, C. T. Derk, D. Wang, and E. DeSousa



Perception of Breakthrough Pain in Patients with Chronic Painful Conditions

LT Pizzi¹, SP Lee¹, D Richardson¹, N Cobb¹, B Leas¹, R Toner¹, V Pracilio¹, SK Ballas², A Ashkenazi³, CT Derk³, D Wang³, E DeSousa³

¹Department of Health Policy, Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia PA, USA

²Cardeza Foundation, Department of Medicine, Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, PA, USA

³Jefferson University Physicians, Philadelphia PA, USA

Background

- Breakthrough pain has been defined as "a transitory increase in pain to greater than moderate intensity, which occurs on a baseline pain of moderate intensity or less in a patient receiving chronic opioid therapy"¹
- However, pain flares may also be experienced by patients with medical conditions that are not routinely treated with opioids
- An understanding of how patients characterize their pain flares will improve the scientific and clinical communities' ability to communicate with this population

1. Portenoy RK, Hagen NA. Breakthrough pain: Definition, prevalence, and characteristics. Pain 11990;41:273-81.

Objective

- To understand how patients with chronic non-cancer pain define and describe pain flares

Study Design

- A 3-month prospective, observational study of outpatients at a large U.S. tertiary care center
- Follow-up consisted of a 1 week diary administered at baseline, then a monthly telephone survey for 3 consecutive months

Results

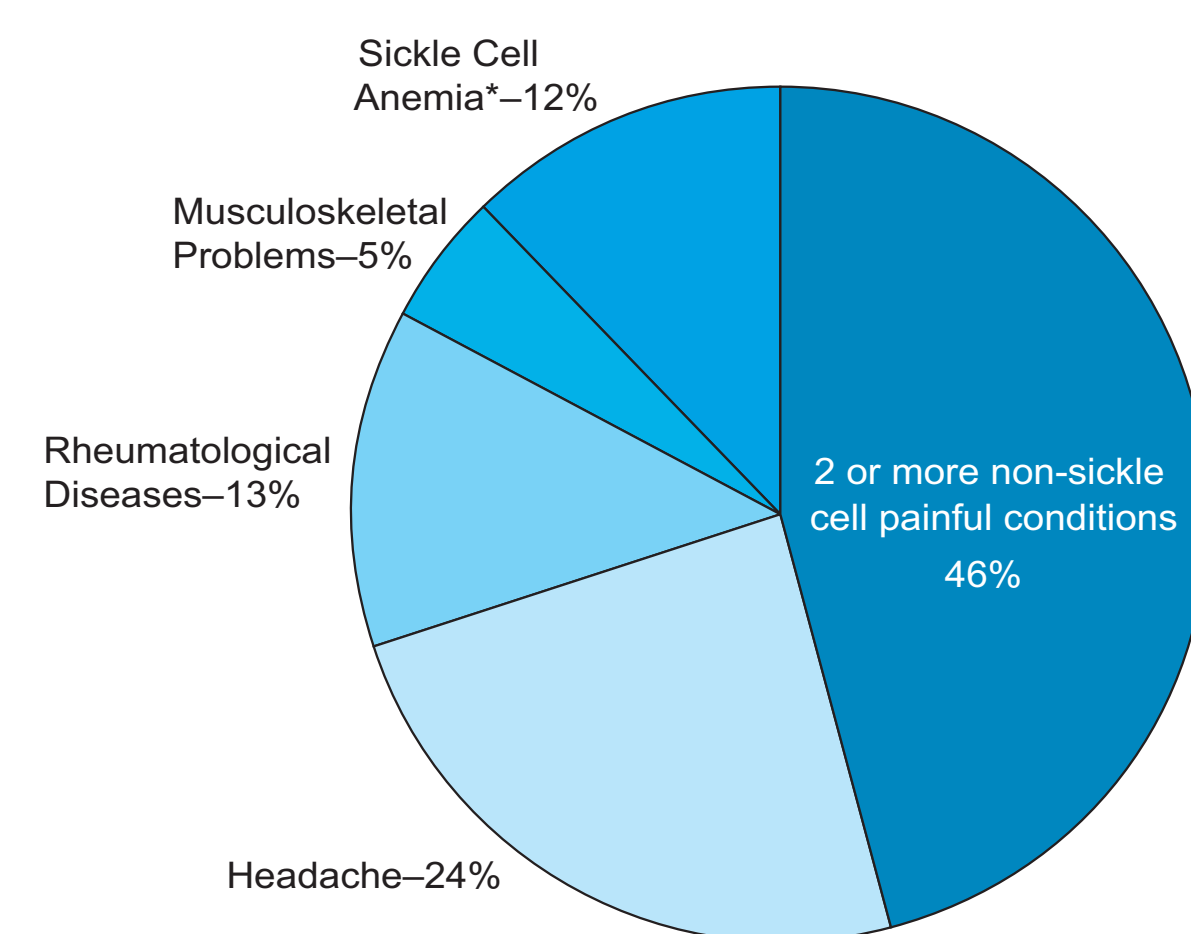
Demographics

A total of 161 participants completed the diary. Most were female (79%), Caucasian (68%), and experienced at least 1 pain flare during the diary week (88%).

Gender	n	%
Females	127	79%
Males	34	21%
Ethnicity	n	%
Caucasian	106	68%
African American	45	29%
Hispanic	4	3%
Asian	1	1%
Other	1	1%
At Least 1 Pain Flare During Diary Week	n	%
Yes	141	88%
No	15	9%

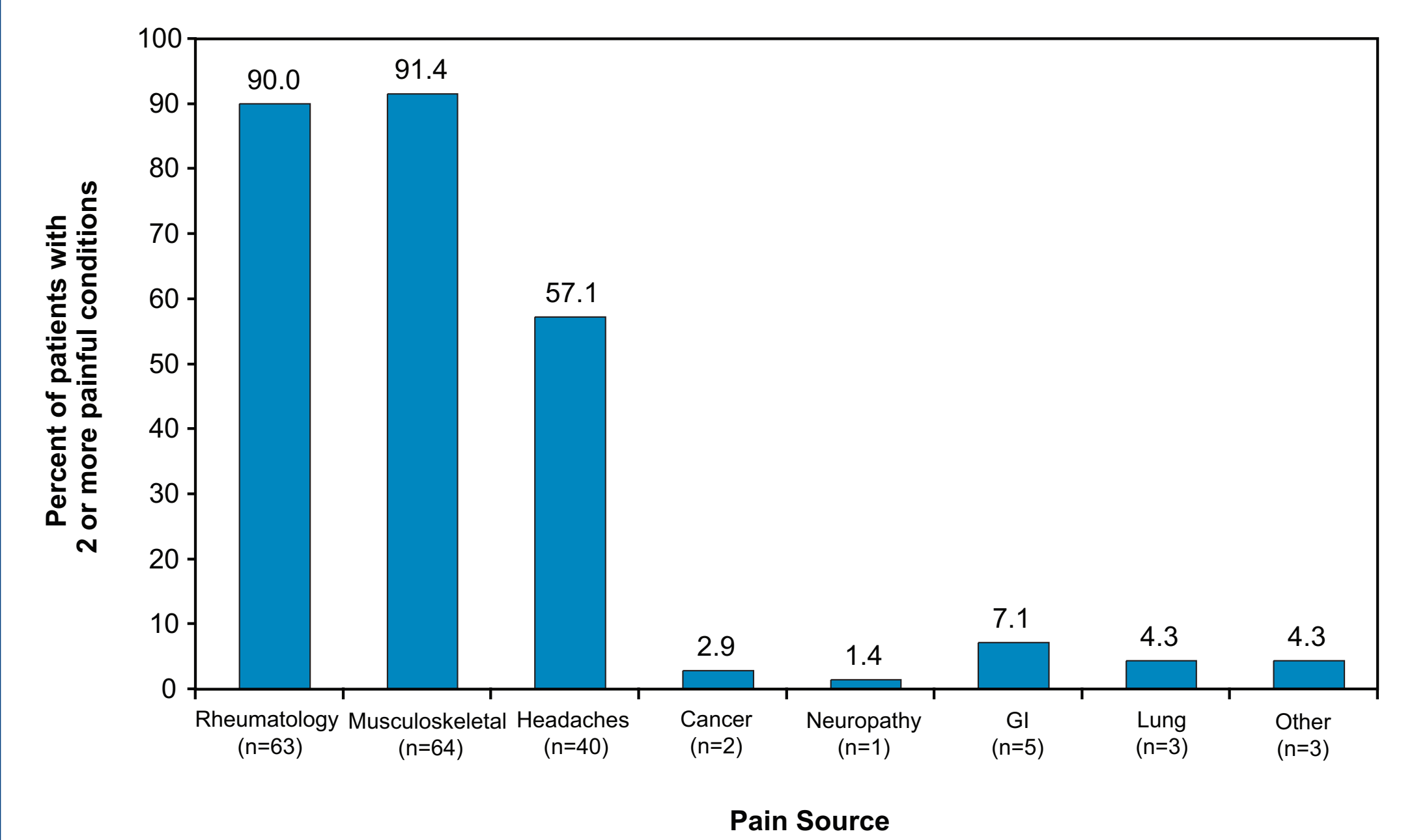
Enrollment by Pain Source (n=151)

Among the 161 patients enrolled, 151 answered both pain flare definition questions. Of these, 36 suffered from headache, 19 from rheumatological diseases, 8 from musculoskeletal problems, 18 from sickle cell anemia, and 70 with 2 or more painful non-sickle cell conditions



*Patients with sickle cell anemia and other painful conditions

Sources of Pain Among Patients with 2 or More Painful Conditions (n=70)*



*Patients can have two sources of pain that fall into the same category.

Demographics

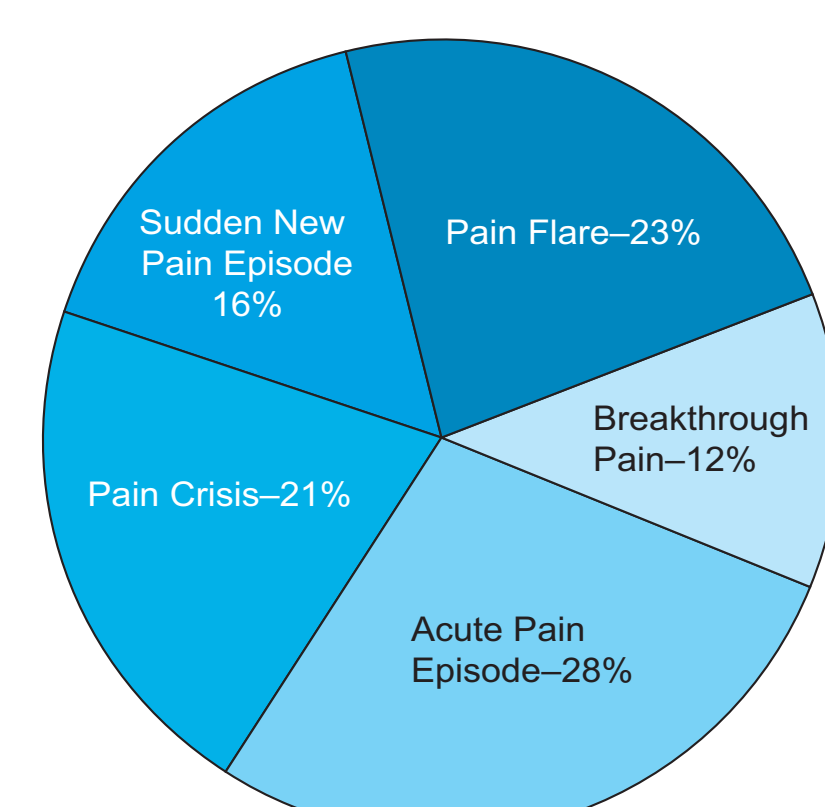
The mean pain level reported during the diary week was 6, and the mean age was 47 years.

	n	Mean	Median	SD	Range
Pain Level*	159	5.77	6	2.1	0.0-10.0
Age (years)	161	47.44	48	14.34	18.0-83.0

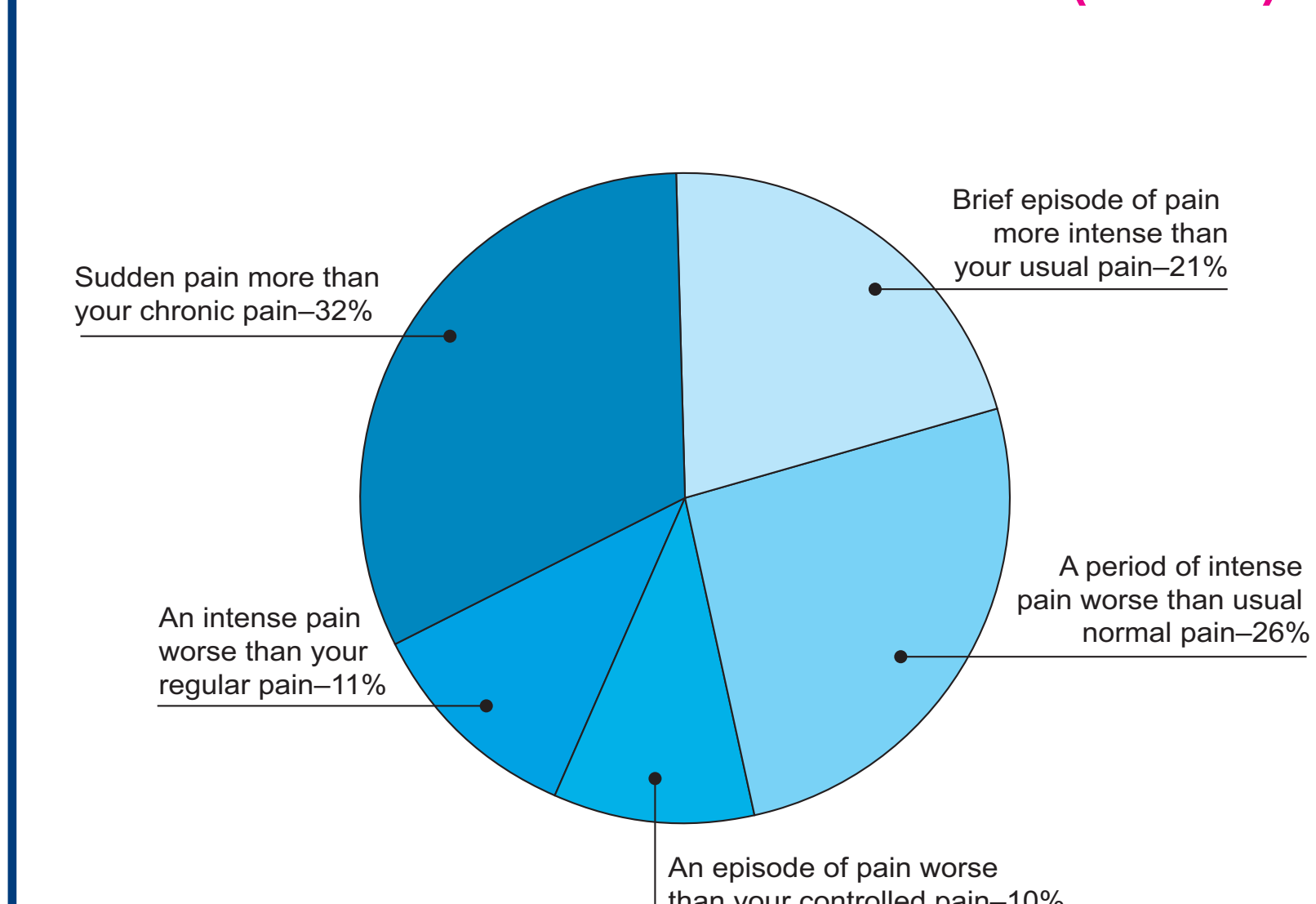
*Pain scores based on 10-point scale with 0 described as "No Pain" and 10 described as the "Worst Pain Imaginable"

Term Preferred to Describe a Pain Flare (n=155)

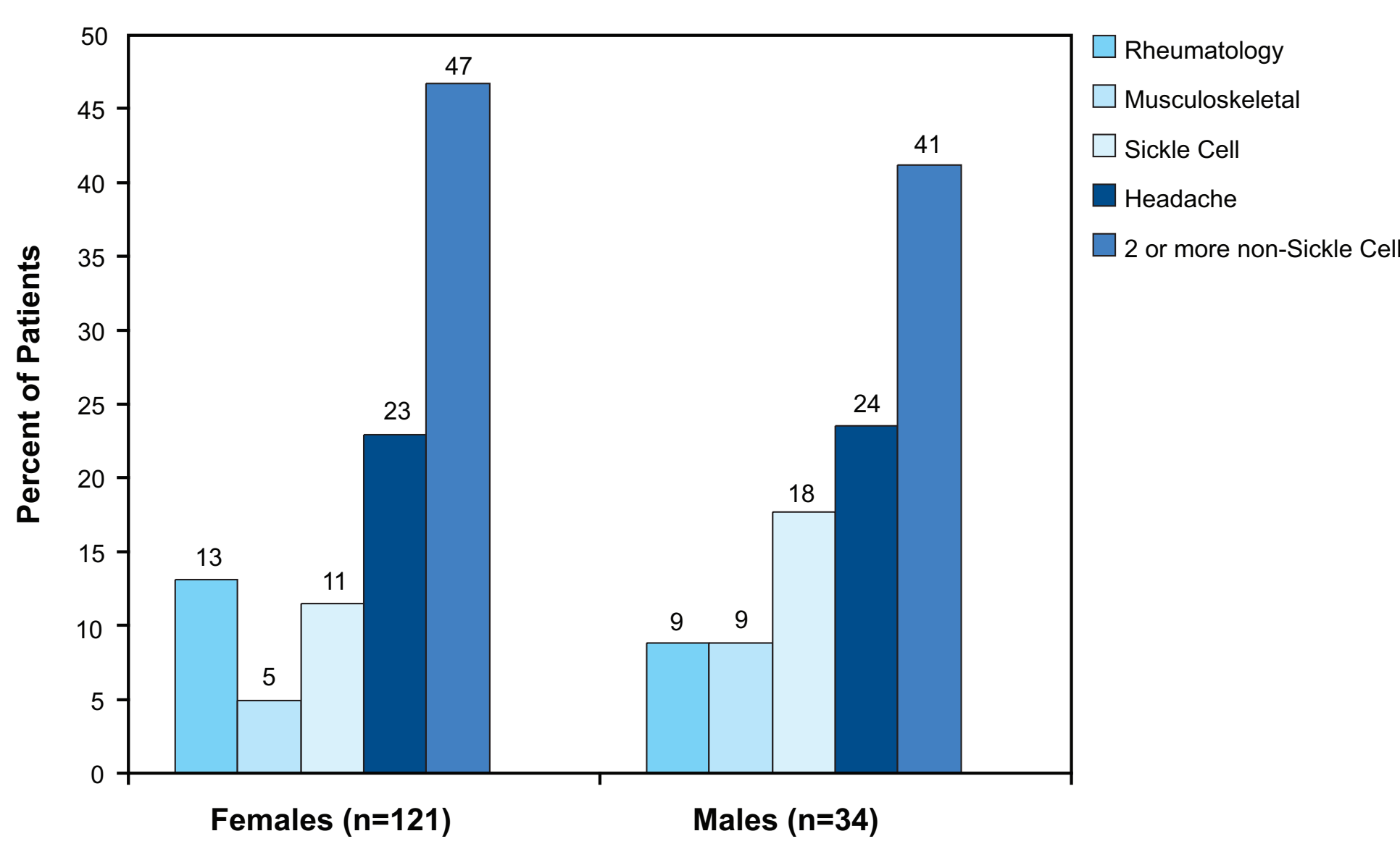
The most common terms used to describe a pain flare were "Acute Pain Episode" (28%), "Pain Flare" (23%), and "Pain Crisis" (21%)



How Patients Defined a "Pain Flare" (n=154)

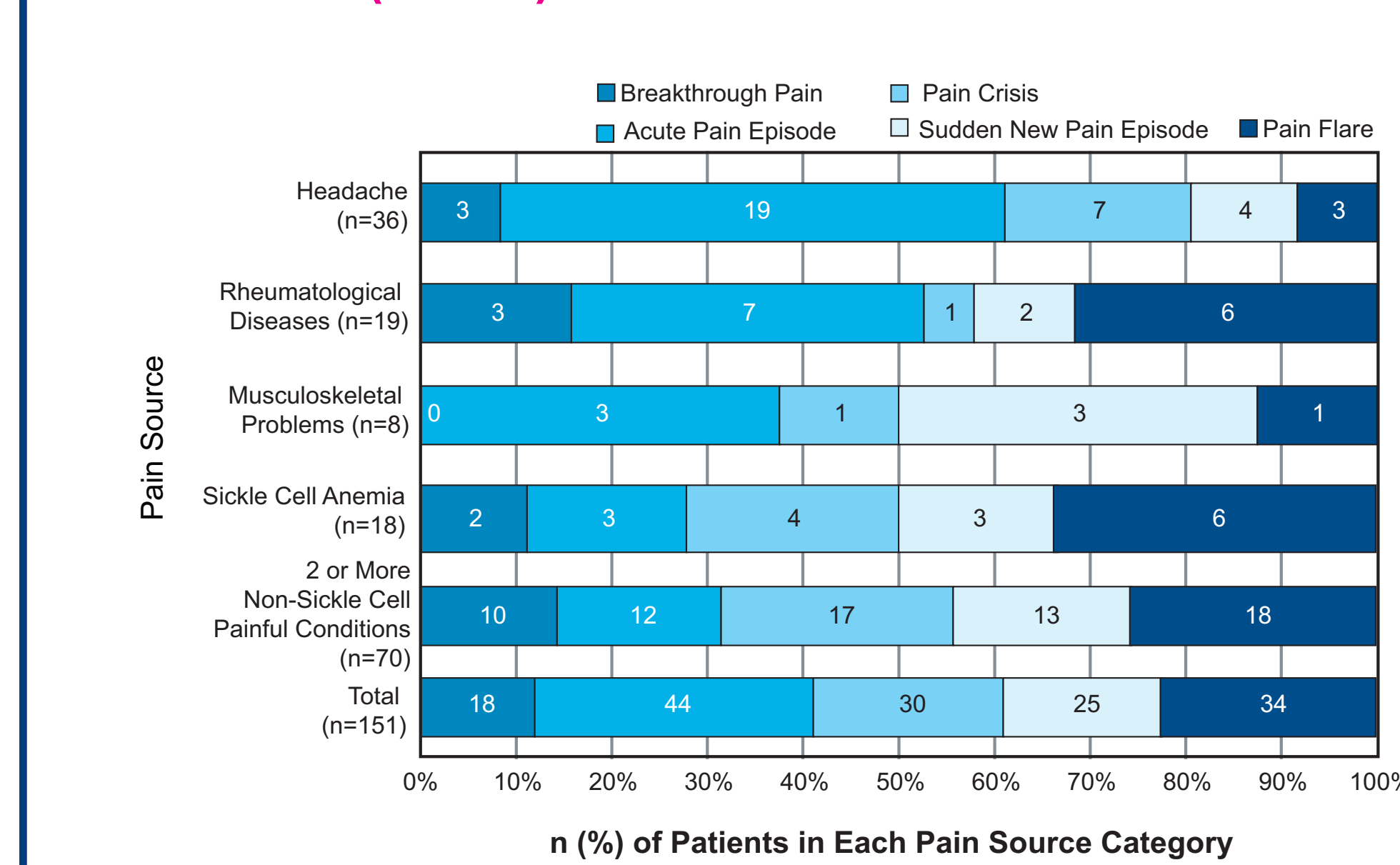


Pain Source by Gender*

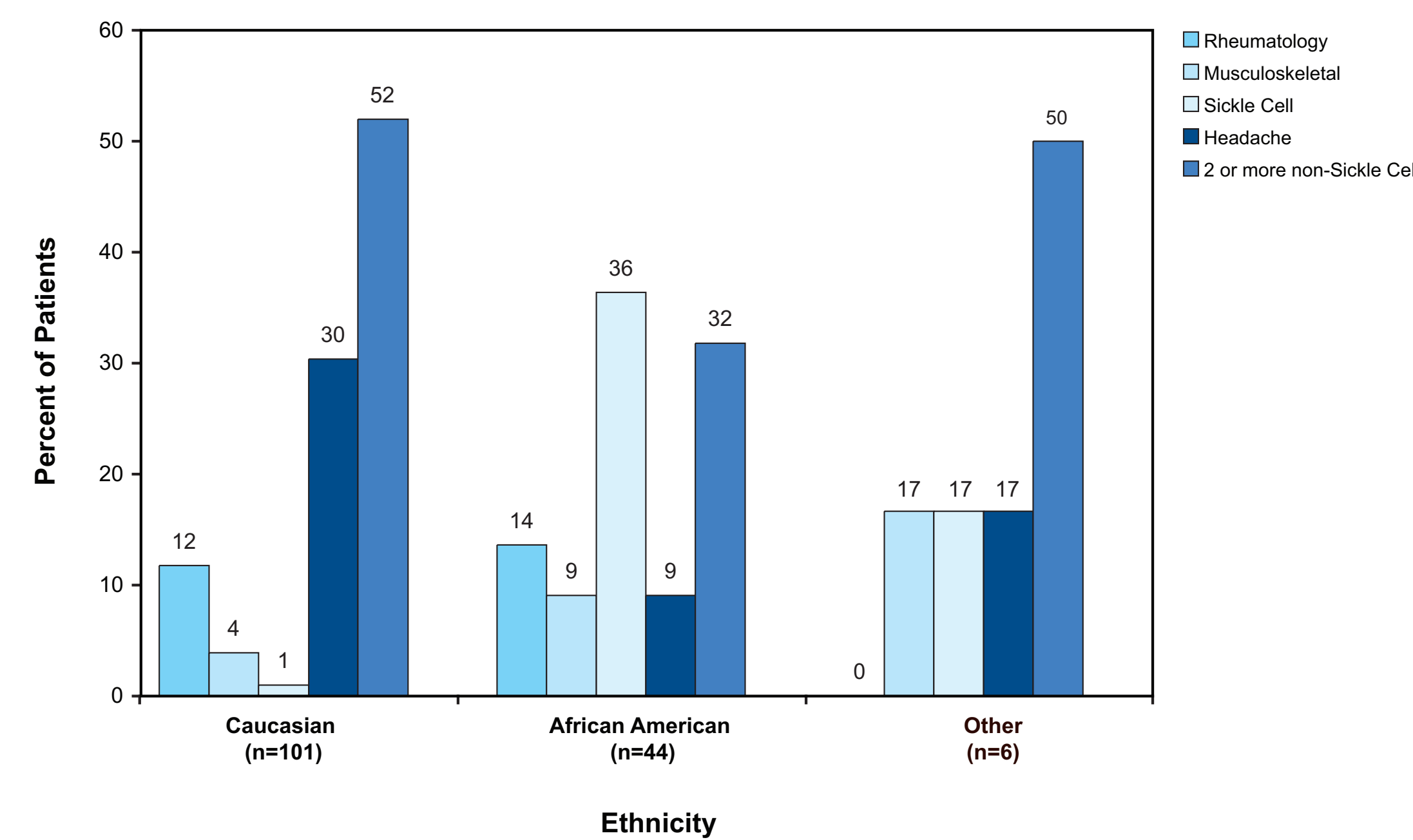


*Percent of patients within each gender group with specified pain source

Term Preferred to Describe a Pain Flare, by Pain Source (n=151)



Pain Source by Ethnicity*



*Percent of patients within each ethnicity group with specified pain source

Disclosure

- This study was funded through an Investigator Sponsored Research grant from Cephalon, Inc.
- Results reflect slight changes to numbers presented in the published abstract because poster analyses are limited to those who responded to both items in the Pain Flare Definitions Questionnaire

Acknowledgements

- The authors wish to acknowledge Karin Coyne, PhD and United BioSource Corporation for development work on the Pain Flare Definitions Questionnaire
- We also appreciate the assistance of Angela Yin-Chieh Yu, PharmD candidate, in developing the poster

Limitations

- Patients appear to have severe disease and therefore are not representative of all patients with these conditions
- Analyses are limited by small Pain Source groups
- Study fails to capture patients with neuropathic pain, another important source of chronic non-cancer pain
- Additional analyses of participants with 2 or more sources of pain would be worthwhile to examine whether their perceptions are consistent with the single-source pain groups

Conclusions

- Participants did not prefer to use the term "Breakthrough Pain" when referring to a pain flare
 - They preferred the terms "Acute Pain Episode" and "Pain Crisis" or simply "Pain Flare"
- Chronic headache patients appeared to prefer the term "Acute Pain Episode"
- The concepts of "Sudden", "Period", and "Brief" appear to be important when defining a pain flare
- Results will be helpful to outcomes researchers who study pain and to clinicians who treat patients with these conditions