

A clinical guide for physiotherapists to assess and manage cervical musculoskeletal impairment and pain sensitivity in migraine patients.

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J Man Manip Ther J Man Manip Ther 600 jmmt 9433812 The Journal of Manual & Manipulative Therapy 1066-9817 2042-6186 Taylor & Francis PMC12459169 PMC12459169.1 12459169 12459169 40382683 10.1080/10669817.2025.2502804 2502804 1 Version of Record Research Article Research Articles A clinical guide for physiotherapists to assess and manage cervical musculoskeletal impairment and pain sensitivity in migraine patients M. CASTALDO ET AL. JOURNAL OF MANUAL & MANIPULATIVE THERAPY <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2427-720X> Castaldo Matteo a b <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0892-1579> Arendt-Nielsen Lars a c d <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2172-6738> Di Antonio Stefano a e a Department of Health Science and Technology, Center for Pain and Neuroplasticity (CNAP), SMI, School of Medicine, Aalborg University , Aalborg , Denmark b Department of Medicine and Surgery, Clinical Psychology, Clinical Psychophysiology and Clinical Neuropsychology Labs, University of Parma , Parma , Italy c Department of Medical Gastroenterology, Mech-Sense, Aalborg University Hospital , Aalborg , Denmark d Steno Diabetes Center North Denmark, Clinical Institute, Aalborg University Hospital , Aalborg, Denmark e Department of Neuroscience, Rehabilitation, Ophthalmology, Genetics and Maternal Child Health, University of Genoa , Genoa , Italy CONTACT Stefano Di Antonio diantoniostefano@gmail.com Department of Health Science and Technology, Center for Pain and Neuroplasticity, School of Medicine, Aalborg University, Selma Lagerlöfs Vej 249, 9260 Gistrup, Denmark 18 5 2025 2025 33 5 497451 412 429 18 05 2026 18 05 2026 25 09 2025 18 05 2026 Integra 18 9 2025 Integra 18 9 2025 28 4 2024 01 5 2025 © 2025 Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group 2025 Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group ABSTRACT Introduction Migraine is a complex neurological disorder characterized by different signs and symptoms, often presenting with an altered pain sensitivity and cervical musculoskeletal impairments. Thus, the management of migraine patients should include the assessment and eventually a specific treatment of these characteristics.

Physiotherapists play a key role in identifying and managing cervical musculoskeletal impairments and altered pain sensitivity in migraine patients. This manuscript provides evidence-based guidance on assessment techniques and clinical reasoning strategies to help physiotherapists effectively evaluate and interpret these characteristics in clinical practice.

This manuscript serves as a practical guide for physiotherapists by: Outlining physiotherapy assessment techniques for migraine patients.

Providing reference cutoff values to identify increased pain sensitivity and cervical dysfunctions.

Supporting individualized clinical reasoning to understand these characteristics within each patient's overall condition.

Clarifying the rationale behind physiotherapy interventions and integrating hands-on and hands-off therapeutic approaches based on patient-specific needs.