BACKGROUND
Migraine and anxiety are comorbid. Anxiety is associated with higher levels of migraine disability. The Unwinding Anxiety (UA) intervention is an evidence-based mobile health app that has demonstrated efficacy to reduce general anxiety disorder symptoms.

METHODS

Objective
We evaluated preliminary clinical signals for headache disability, anxiety, and psychological distress compared to a waitlist control.

Methods & Procedures
We studied an app-based mindfulness training for a population of people with migraine and anxiety recruited through Miles for Migraine.

Participants & Procedures
38 participants (100% women; M age = 47, SD = 13) were recruited from the Miles for Migraine website and listserv.

Methods
After an online prescreen and phone screen, participants were randomized to receive either Unwinding Anxiety (UA) immediately, or after a 6-week waitlist period.

During the treatment, participants received the UA mobile health app, and also attended 6 weekly group sessions designed to facilitate inquiry with trained mindfulness facilitators who also experience migraine.

Primary outcomes were feasibility (session attendance) and acceptability (credibility score from credibility expectancy questionnaire). These outcomes were obtained from both the UA and waitlist groups after they received treatment.

Clinical outcomes were assessed at Week 0, Week 6, and Week 12 (waitlist group only): the one month Migraine Disability Assessment (MIDAS), monthly headache days, average monthly pain intensity, anxiety symptoms (GAD-7), depressive symptoms (PHQ-9), pain catastrophizing (PCS), headache acceptance (HAQ) and mindfulness/interceptive awareness (MAIA).

Data Analysis
Mixed models for repeated measures evaluated the change in clinical outcomes in the UA vs. Waitlist groups (Week 0 vs. Week 12 for UA, Week 6 for Waitlist) to post-treatment (Week 6 for UA, Week 12 for Waitlist).

CONCLUSION

The Unwinding Anxiety for Migraine intervention was acceptable to all participants, with mixed feasibility across groups.

We observed reductions in psychiatric symptoms and changes in putative psychological mechanisms pre- to post-treatment across all study participants.

We observed a specific treatment effect in mindfulness/interceptive awareness.

REFERENCES & FUNDING

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Unwinding Anxiety for Migraine: A Pilot Randomized Clinical Trial of a Mindfulness Intervention for People with Migraine and Anxiety

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