



My Drift

Title: Migraine

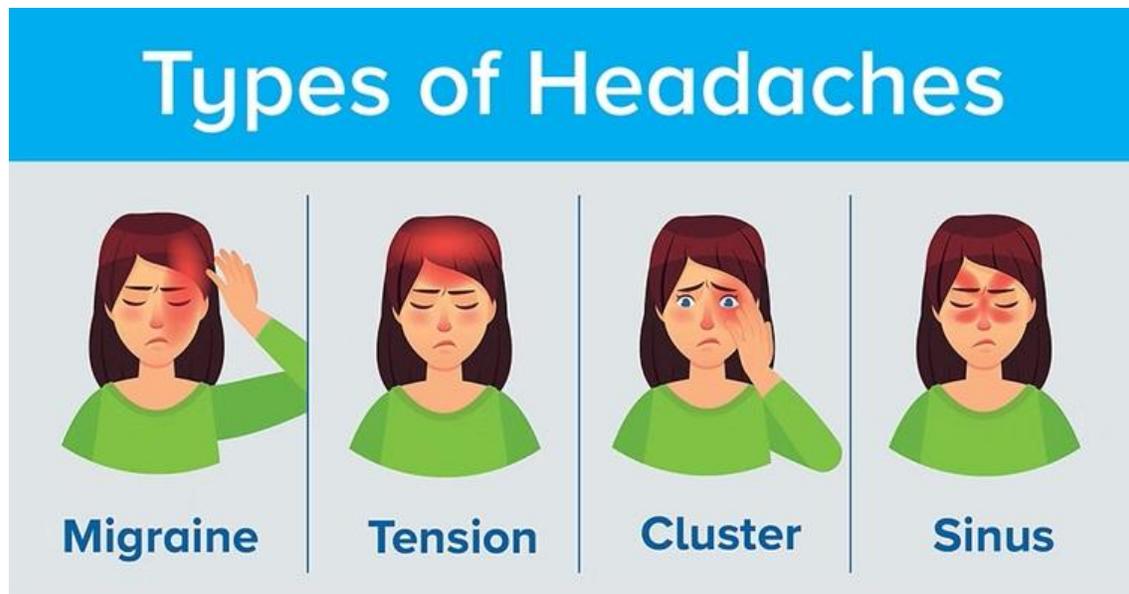
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Is a migraine a headache?

Yes, a migraine is a type of severe, recurring headache, but it's also a complex neurological disease, not just a bad headache, involving intense throbbing pain (often one-sided) and other debilitating symptoms like nausea, vomiting, and extreme sensitivity to light and sound, often with phases like aura before the pain hits. While it includes a headache, its distinct symptoms and neurological basis differentiate it from regular tension headaches.



The most common type of headache is the tension-type headache, which causes a dull, squeezing pain on both sides of the head, often triggered by stress, poor sleep, or muscle tension in the neck, affecting a huge portion of the adult population. Other common types include migraines (more severe with throbbing pain, light sensitivity) and sinus headaches (pressure in the face/forehead with congestion). Cluster headache is a rare and severe type of headache that causes intense pain in or around the eye on one side of the head.

Key Differences and Symptoms:

Pain: Migraine pain is typically pulsating/throbbing and often focused on one side of the head, whereas tension headaches might feel like a band of pressure.

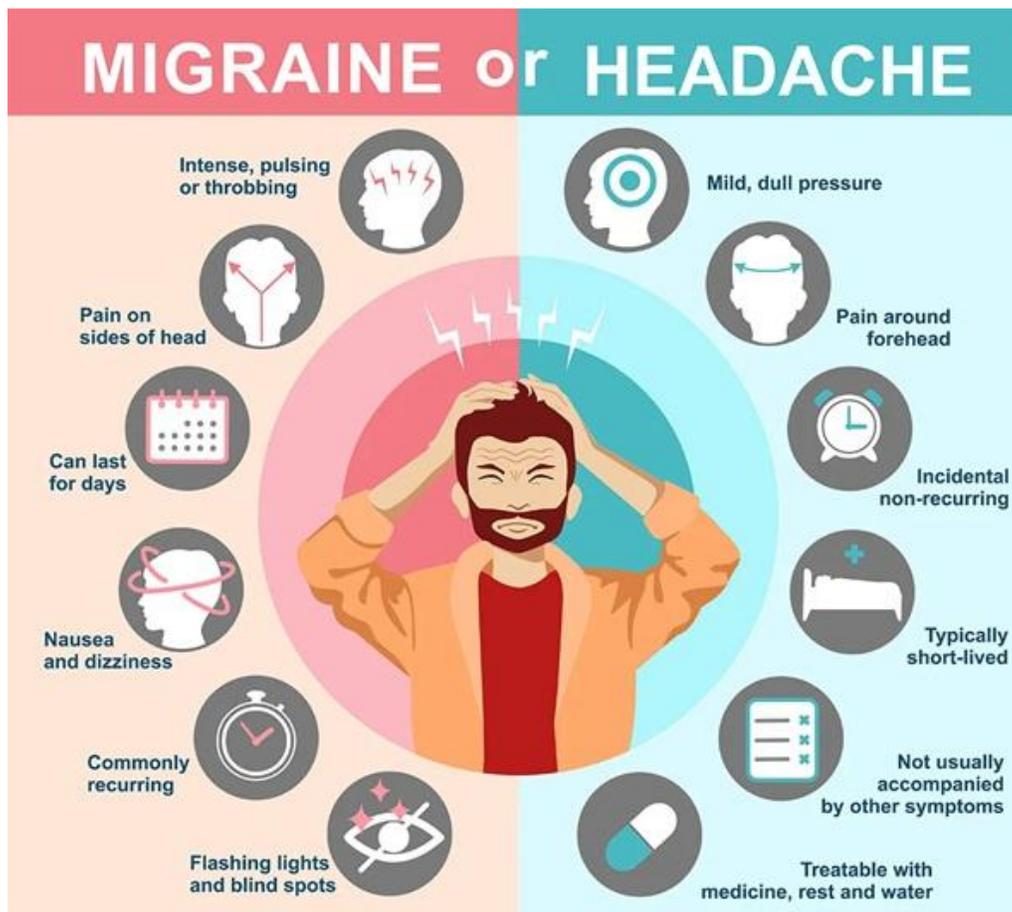
Associated Symptoms: Migraines frequently bring nausea, vomiting, fatigue, and heightened sensitivity to light (photophobia) and sound (phonophobia).

Aura: About a third of people experience aura, which can involve visual disturbances (flashing lights, blind spots) or tingling before the headache.

Phases: Migraines can occur in stages: prodrome (warning signs like mood changes), aura, the headache (attack) phase, and postdrome (migraine hangover).

Impact: Migraines are disabling neurological events that can last hours to days, requiring specific management beyond typical headache relief.

In short, all migraines involve a headache, but not all headaches are migraines; a migraine is a specific, severe neurological disorder with unique features.



What is a migraine?

Migraine

Migraine is recurring headaches which makes one half of the head pain terribly.

Symptoms A Migraine

- Head pain
- Vomiting
- Sensitivity to sound
- Brain fog, inability to focus
- Numbness or tingling in the hands, arms, feet, legs or face
- Nausea
- Fatigue
- Sensitivity to light
- Dizziness/light-headedness
- Body or neck aches

HOW TO AVOID MIGRAINES



1 KNOW YOUR
FOOD TRIGGERS



2 EAT REGULAR
MEALS



3 AVOID EXCESS
CAFFEINE



4 EXERCISE
REGULARLY



5 GET ENOUGH
SLEEP



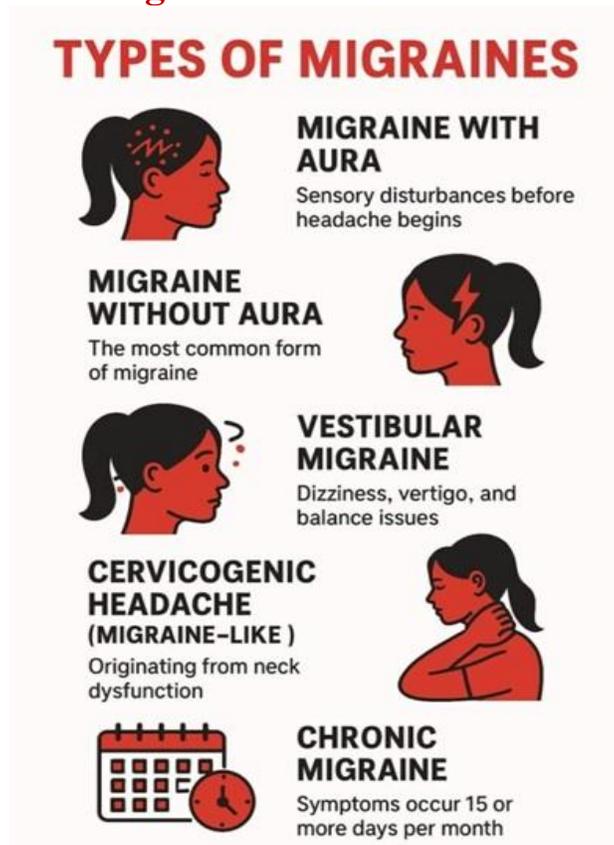
6 REDUCE
STRESS

A migraine is much more than a bad headache. It can cause debilitating, throbbing, and one-sided head pain that can leave you in bed for days. Movement, lights, sounds and other triggers may cause symptoms like fatigue, nausea, vision changes, irritability and more. This headache gets worse with:

- ✚ Physical activity
- ✚ Bright lights
- ✚ Loud noises
- ✚ Strong odors

Migraines are disruptive. They can interfere with your daily routine and affect your ability to meet personal and social obligations. Treatment is available to help you manage migraines. A healthcare provider can help you manage symptoms, so migraines don't take over your life.

What are the types of migraines?



Migraine Aura

A migraine aura is a set of temporary, reversible neurological symptoms—most commonly visual disturbances—that typically act as a warning sign 10 to 60 minutes before a headache. These symptoms, caused by cortical spreading depression in the brain, include seeing zig-zag lines, flashes, or blind spots, as well as numbness, tingling, or speech difficulties.

How common are migraines? Migraines are common. Studies show that an estimated 12% of people in the United States experience migraines.

What are the four phases of a migraine?

Migraine

There are four phases of a migraine:

1 – Prodrome occurs up to 24 hours before a headache attack. Symptoms include:

 Mood changes.	 Trouble sleeping.	 Difficulty concentrating.
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2 – Aura happens five to 60 minutes before or during a headache attack. Symptoms include:

 Muscle weakness.	 Vision changes.	 Ringing in your ears.
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3 – Headache attack lasts between four and 72 hours. Symptoms include:

 Nausea and vomiting.	 Severe, one-sided head pain.	 Sensitivity to sound, lights and odors.
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4 – Postdrome lasts no more than 48 hours. Symptoms include:

 Fatigue.	 Neck stiffness.	 Trouble focusing.
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Migraine symptoms

Migraine symptoms vary based on the stage. Every migraine is different, and you won't necessarily experience symptoms during all four stages of every migraine.

Prodrome symptoms

- ✚ Mood changes.
- ✚ Difficulty concentrating.
- ✚ Trouble sleeping.
- ✚ Fatigue.
- ✚ Nausea.
- ✚ Increased hunger and thirst.
- ✚ Frequent urination.

Aura symptoms

- ✚ Muscle weakness.
- ✚ Vision changes.
- ✚ Ringing in your ears (tinnitus).
- ✚ Sensitivity to touch (feeling like someone is touching you).
- ✚ Numbness and tingling.
- ✚ Difficulty speaking or concentrating.

Headache attack symptoms

Head pain gradually gets more intense. Usually affects one side of your head but can affect both. It can occur with other symptoms like:

- ✚ Nausea and vomiting.
- ✚ Light, sound and odor sensitivity.

Postdrome symptoms

- ✚ Fatigue.
- ✚ Stiff neck.
- ✚ Sensitivity to light and sound.
- ✚ Difficulty concentrating.
- ✚ Nausea.
- ✚ Dizziness.

What does a migraine feel like?

Migraine headache pain may feel like the following:

- ✚ Throbbing.
- ✚ Pulsing.
- ✚ Pounding.
- ✚ Dull.

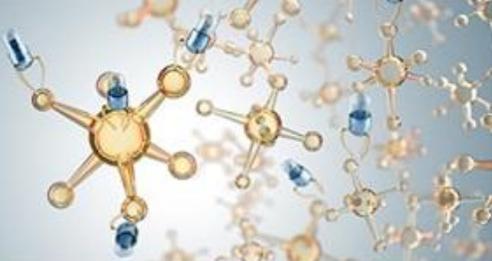
A migraine can feel different for each person. A migraine headache ranges from mild to severe. Head pain can start on one side and shift to the opposite side. You may also have pain around your eyes or temple, and sometimes, around your face, sinuses, jaw or neck.

How often do migraines happen?

The frequency of a migraine varies from person to person. You might have one migraine per year or one per week. On average, most people experience two to four per month. They're most common in the morning. Most migraines are unpredictable, but sometimes, you can have an idea of when a migraine will happen, like before menstruation or after feeling stress.

What causes a migraine?

MIGRAINE CAUSES



Health conditions that cause migraines:

1. A brain tumor
2. Traumatic brain injury
3. An infection, such as meningitis
4. A stroke
5. Epilepsy
6. High blood pressure
7. Hearing problems
8. Fibromyalgia
9. Depression or anxiety
10. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
11. A pre-term birth



Genetic causes of migraines:

- 1 Gene changes that can predispose you to certain health conditions, such as migraines
- 2 Aura symptoms, such as flashes of light, blind spots, zigzag lines, numbness, speech problems, and muscle weakness
- 3 A family history of migraines, which is the case of familial hemiplegic migraines
- 4 Sporadic hemiplegic migraine, which means you're the first person in your family with hemiplegic migraines

Possible migraines triggers:

Allergies Stress Fatigue Hormonal changes

Researchers aren't sure of the exact cause of migraines, but studies show genetics play a role.

When you have a headache, specific nerves in your blood vessels send pain signals to your brain. This releases inflammatory substances into your head's nerves and blood vessels. It's unclear why your nerves do that.

What triggers a migraine?

A trigger is something that causes symptoms to start. Some of the most common migraine triggers include:

- ✚ Stress.
- ✚ Hormonal changes.
- ✚ Certain medications.
- ✚ Changes to your sleep.
- ✚ Weather condition changes.
- ✚ Too much physical activity (overexertion).
- ✚ Addictive substances like caffeine or tobacco.
- ✚ Missing a meal.
- ✚ Exposure to bright lights, loud noises or strong odors.

Your healthcare provider can help you identify your triggers. They might recommend keeping a migraine journal to track similarities between migraine attacks.

What foods trigger migraines?

Your body may have a sensitivity to specific chemicals and preservatives in foods. This sensitivity makes a migraine more likely to happen, especially if combined with other triggers.

Some of the most common food triggers include:

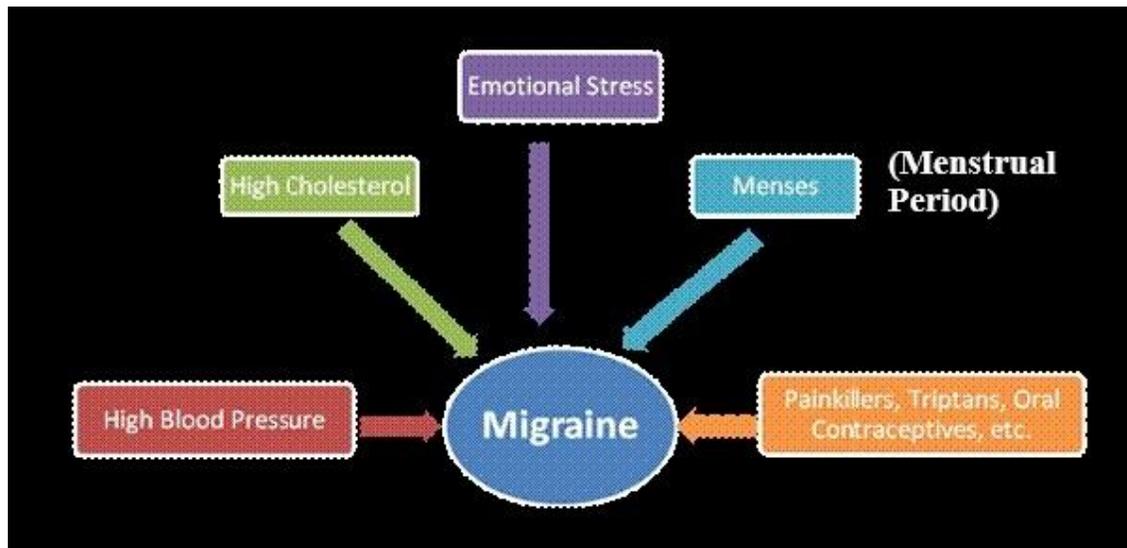
- ✚ Aged cheese.
- ✚ Beverages containing alcohol.
- ✚ Chocolate.
- ✚ Food additives like nitrates and MSG.
- ✚ Processed or cured foods (hot dogs, pepperoni).
- ✚ Fermented or pickled foods.

Are migraines hereditary?

Yes, migraines tend to run in biological families. Up to 80% of people with migraines have a first-degree biological relative with the condition.

What are the risk factors for a migraine?

A migraine can affect anyone at any age, from children to adults. Women are more likely than men to experience a migraine. About 80% of people who suffer from chronic migraine attacks are women.



Other risk factors that may make you more likely to experience a migraine include:

- ✚ Biological family history of migraines.
- ✚ Underlying medical condition (depression, anxiety, sleep disorders and epilepsy).
- ✚ Regular use of tobacco products.

Diagnosis and Tests

How is a migraine diagnosed?

A healthcare provider will diagnose a migraine after a physical exam and neurological exam. They'll also learn more about your medical history and biological family health history. Your provider may ask you questions to learn more about your symptoms, including:

- ✚ What symptoms do you experience?
- ✚ Can you describe the feeling and location of your headache?
- ✚ How severe are your symptoms?
- ✚ How long did your symptoms last?
- ✚ Did anything make your headache better or worse?

Your provider may also order blood tests and imaging tests (such as a CT scan or an MRI) to make sure there aren't any other causes for your headache. An electroencephalogram (EEG) may help your provider rule out other conditions.

Who diagnoses a migraine?

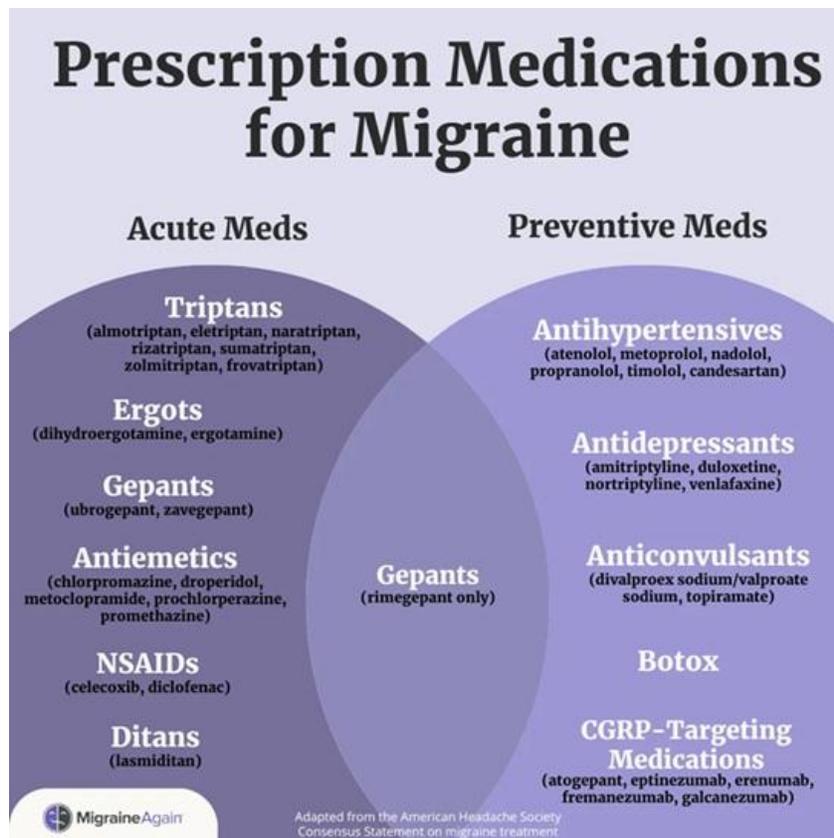
If you think you have a migraine, discuss your symptoms with a primary care physician (PCP) first. They can diagnose migraine headaches and start treatment. Your PCP may refer you to a headache specialist or a neurologist.

Management and Treatment

How is a migraine treated?

There isn't a cure for migraines. But a healthcare provider can help you manage migraine symptoms through the following:

- ✚ Taking medications.
- ✚ Avoiding migraine triggers.
- ✚ Using alternative migraine remedies.



What medications treat migraines?

A healthcare provider might recommend taking medications to treat migraines. There are two types of medications available:

Medications to stop migraines: You can take these medications at the first sign of a migraine. They stop or reduce migraine symptoms like pain, nausea, sensitivity and more.

Medications to prevent migraines: A healthcare provider usually prescribes preventive medications if you experience severe symptoms that interfere with your routine or have frequent migraines. These medications reduce how often and how severe migraines affect you. You can take these medications as directed, usually on a daily basis.

Common medications that stop migraines include:

- ✚ Triptans (5-hydroxytryptamine).
- ✚ Ditans (lasmiditan).
- ✚ Gepants (rimegepant and ubrogepant).
- ✚ Dihydroergotamine (prochlorperazine).
- ✚ Antiemetic medications (metoclopramide).

Common preventive migraine medications include:

- ✚ Antiseizure medications (valproic acid, topiramate).
- ✚ Beta-blockers (atenolol, propranolol, nadolol).
- ✚ Calcium channel blockers (verapamil).
- ✚ Monoclonal antibodies (erenumab, fremanezumab, galcanezumab).
- ✚ Tricyclic antidepressants (amitriptyline, nortriptyline, doxepin).
- ✚ Serotonin and norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (venlafaxine, duloxetine).

Medications come in different forms, like:

- ✚ An injection under your skin (subcutaneous).
- ✚ An oral medication (taken by mouth).
- ✚ A nasal spray.
- ✚ Through an IV (intravenously).
- ✚ Suppository.

You and your healthcare provider will discuss the specific medication, combination of medications and formulations to best manage your symptoms. All medications should be used under the direction of a headache specialist or provider. As with any medication, it's important to carefully follow your provider's instructions.

Over-the-counter migraine medications

Over-the-counter migraine medications are effective if you have mild to moderate migraine symptoms. The main ingredients in pain-relieving medications are ibuprofen, aspirin, acetaminophen, naproxen and caffeine.

Be cautious when taking over-the-counter pain relievers. Sometimes, overusing them can cause analgesic-rebound headaches or a dependency problem. If you're taking any over-the-counter pain medications more than two to three times a week, let your healthcare provider know. They may suggest more effective prescription medications.

What are the newest migraine medications?

Migraine Treatment

The newest novel drug (approved March 9, 2023) for the treatment of migraine is Zavzpret (zavegepant) nasal spray.

Migraine Prevention

The newest novel drug (approved September 28, 2021) for the prevention of migraine is Qulipta (atogepant).

Avoiding migraine triggers

A healthcare provider can help you identify what triggers your migraines. They may ask you to keep a migraine journal or diary. A migraine journal can help you keep track of when a migraine happened, how you felt and how long it lasted. You can also add details about the foods you ate or the activities you participated in to learn more about any possible triggers.

Once you identify a trigger, you can take steps to avoid it. This isn't always possible, but awareness of your triggers is helpful to identify them and treat a migraine when it starts.

For example, if stress is a trigger, you may want to speak with a mental health professional to help you manage your stress. If you get migraine symptoms when you miss a meal, set an alarm on your phone to remind you to eat meals on a regular schedule.

Alternative migraine remedies

You may want to try alternative therapies to help you manage migraines. These include:

- + Taking vitamins, minerals or herbs like riboflavin (vitamin B2), magnesium, feverfew, butterbur or co-enzyme Q10.**
- + Relaxation techniques like yoga.**
- + Acupuncture.**
- + Biofeedback.**
- + Botulinum toxin type A injections (Botox®).**

Talk to your healthcare provider before starting any alternative therapies for migraines.

How do I deal with a migraine as it happens?

There are certain things you can do to help you feel better when a migraine attack happens, including:

- ✚ Resting in a dark, quiet, cool room.
- ✚ Applying a cold or warm compress or washcloth to your forehead or behind your neck.
- ✚ Massaging your scalp.
- ✚ Applying pressure to your temples in a circular motion.
- ✚ Keeping yourself in a calm state (meditating).

Outlook / Prognosis

What's the outlook for a migraine?

Migraines are different for each person. They're temporary but recurring throughout your life. There's also no available cure. Your healthcare provider can help you manage migraines, so they go away faster and are less intense. It may take time to find a treatment option that's right for you. Let your healthcare provider know if your symptoms improve or get worse.

Prevention

Can a migraine be prevented?

You can't prevent all migraines. But you can take preventive migraine medications as directed by your healthcare provider to reduce how often and how severe migraine symptoms affect you. You can also learn more about your triggers and work with your healthcare provider to avoid them.

Living with migraines

When should I see a healthcare provider?

Schedule a visit with your healthcare provider if you experience:

- ✚ New symptoms.
- ✚ Worsening symptoms.
- ✚ Side effects from treatment.

Call 911 (or your local emergency services number) or go to an emergency room right away if you:

- ✚ Experience the worst headache of your life (thunderclap headache).

- ✚ Have new neurological symptoms that you've never had before, like difficulty speaking, balance problems, vision issues, confusion, seizures or numbing/tingling sensations.
- ✚ Have a headache after experiencing a head injury.

What questions should I ask my healthcare provider?

- ✚ Will I grow out of migraines?
- ✚ What medications do you recommend?
- ✚ How can I prevent migraines?
- ✚ What type of migraine do I have?
- ✚ Are my migraines considered chronic?

Conclusion

You've probably had a headache before, but a migraine is different. It can feel like the world is ending and there's nothing you can do to make it go away. Even though your symptoms are temporary, the duration of a migraine can make it feel like time is moving slower and against you. But there are treatment options available to manage migraines as they happen and prevent them from interfering with your day. A healthcare provider can help you with this, so migraines don't take over your life.



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