

MIGRAINE & HEADACHE AWARENESS MONTH

What is a Migraine?

- A migraine is a neurological condition that causes intense, throbbing headaches, usually on one side of the head.
- It can last from 4 to 72 hours and may be accompanied by nausea, vomiting, sensitivity to light, sound, and sometimes vision changes (aura).
- 📌 It is not just a regular headache — it is a disabling neurological disorder affecting daily life.



How Common is it?

- 📄 Over 213 million Indians suffer from migraine (Global Burden of Disease, Lancet).
- 💎 More common in women (due to hormonal changes) and in people aged 20–50 years.
- 😊👉 Underdiagnosed and often self-treated in India, leading to misuse of painkillers.

Triggers to Watch Out For



- ☕ Caffeine / alcohol
 - zzz Poor sleep
 - 🍲 Skipped meals or spicy foods
 - 📱 Screen time / eye strain
 - 🩺 Hormonal changes
 - 😓 Stress or anxiety
 - ☀️ Weather changes
- Help patients identify and record triggers for better management.

Types of Headaches

Type	Features	Duration
Migraine	Pulsating pain, nausea, sensitivity to light	4–72 hrs
Tension-type	Band-like pressure around head	30 min – few hrs
Cluster	Intense pain near one eye, watery eyes	15 mins – 3 hrs
Sinus	Forehead/cheek pain, with sinus symptoms	Variable

How Can Pharmacists Help? 📄💊

- ✅ **Patient Education:**
 - Explain difference between common headache vs migraine.
 - Guide on non-drug approaches: sleep, hydration, eye care.
- ✅ **Safe Medication Use:**
 - Recommend OTC analgesics (Paracetamol, Ibuprofen) with caution.
 - Warn against overuse (rebound headaches).
 - Refer for triptans or preventive therapy when needed.
- ✅ **Red Flag Identification:**
 - Sudden severe headache
 - Headache with fever, confusion, or vision loss
 - Frequent or worsening headaches

Refer immediately to a physician.
- ✅ **Lifestyle Advice:**
 - Suggest headache diaries, hydration, eye exercises.
 - Suggest use of sunglasses, blue-light filters.
- ✅ **Mental Health Awareness:**
 - Recognize signs of anxiety/depression due to chronic headaches
 - Encourage open dialogue and support

Important Points for Indian Pharmacists to Know:

- 📌 Migraine is among top 3 disabling conditions in India (WHO).
- 📌 Many patients still self-medicate or rely on ayurvedic/home remedies. Pharmacists can act as first point of scientific advice.
- 📌 Provide leaflets/posters in local languages to improve awareness.
- 📌 Keep migraine-friendly OTC meds and trigger-friendly dietary items (ORS, glucose, eye drops) at the counter.