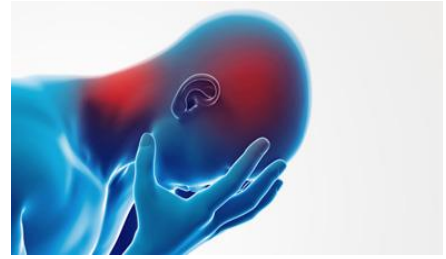


# Migraine Headache



## What is a migraine headache?

A migraine is a severe headache. The pain can be so severe that it interferes with daily activities. A migraine can last a few hours up to several days. The exact cause of migraines is not known.

## What can trigger a migraine headache?

- Stress, eye strain, oversleeping, or not getting enough sleep
- Hormone changes in women from birth control pills, pregnancy, menopause, or during a monthly period
- Skipping meals, going too long without eating, or not drinking enough liquids
- Certain foods or drinks such as chocolate, hard cheese, red wine, or drinks that contain caffeine
- Foods that contain gluten, nitrates, MSG, or artificial sweeteners
- Sunlight, bright or flashing lights, loud noises, smoke, or strong smells
- Heat, humidity, or changes in the weather

## What are the warning signs that a migraine headache is about to start?

Warning signs usually start 15 to 60 minutes before the headache:

- Visual changes (auras), such as blurred vision, temporary blind or bright spots, lines, or hallucinations
- Unusual tiredness or frequent yawning
- Tingling in an arm or leg

## What are the signs and symptoms of a migraine headache?

A migraine headache usually begins as a dull ache around the eye or temple. The pain may get worse with movement. Pain in head that may increase to the point that the person cannot do everyday activities

- Pain on one or both sides of head

- Throbbing, pulsing, or pounding pain in head
- Nausea and vomiting
- Sensitivity to light, noise, or smells

### Diagnosis

- **By taking history of sign and symptoms headache**
- **A neurologic exam**
- **CT Scan or MRI**

### Tips to manage symptoms

- **Rest in a dark, quiet room.** This will help to decrease pain. Sleep may also help relieve the pain.
- **Apply ice to decrease pain.** Use an ice pack, or put crushed ice in a plastic bag. Cover the ice pack with a towel and place it on head. Apply ice for 15 to 20 minutes every hour.
- **Apply heat to decrease pain and muscle spasms.** Use a small towel dampened with warm water or a heating pad, or sit in a warm bath. Apply heat on the area for 20 to 30 minutes every 2 hours.
- **Keep a migraine record.** Write down when migraines start and stop. Include symptoms and what patient were doing when a migraine began. Record what patient ate or drank for 24 hours before the migraine started.

### Precaution to prevent another migraine headache

- **Do not smoke.** Nicotine and other chemicals in cigarettes and cigars can trigger a migraine or make it worse.
- **Do not drink alcohol.** Alcohol can trigger a migraine. It can also keep medicines used to treat migraines from working.
- **Get regular exercise.** Exercise may help prevent migraines. Talk to healthcare provider about the best exercise plan. Try to get at least 30 minutes of exercise on most days.
- **Manage stress.** Stress may trigger a migraine. Learn new ways to relax, such as deep breathing.
- **Create a sleep schedule.** Go to bed and get up at the same times each day. Do not watch television before bed.
- **Eat regular meals.** Include healthy foods such as include fruit, vegetables, whole-grain breads, low-fat dairy products, beans, lean meat, and fish. Do not have food or drinks that trigger migraines.

### Reference- Micromedex Solutions

