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Migraine Headaches in Adults & Children

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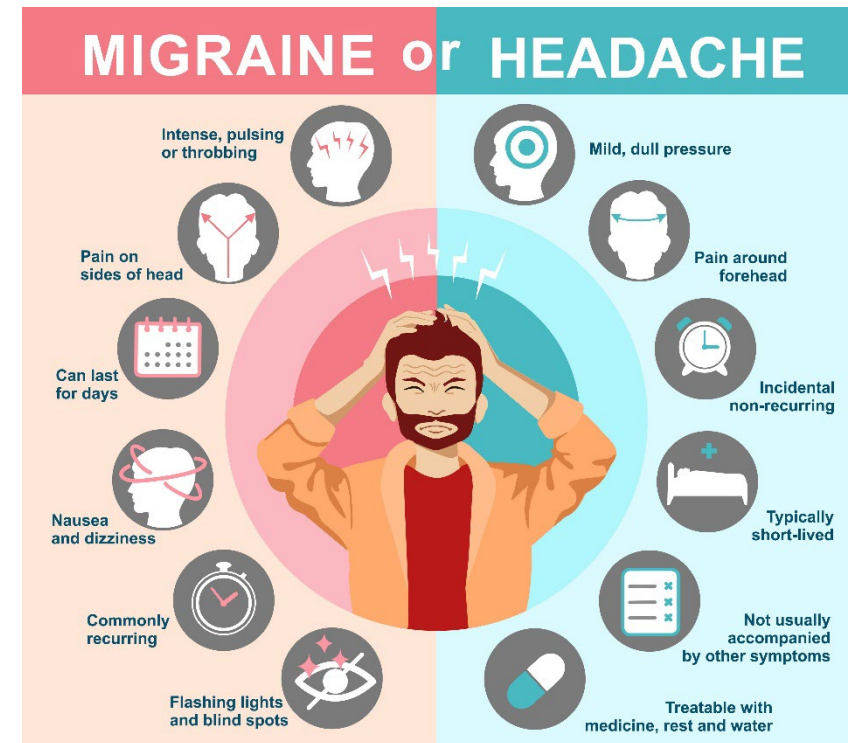
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What Is A Migraine?

A migraine is a neurological disease that is characterized by recurring, intense headaches.

A migraine goes beyond standard head pain often causing:

- Throbbing or a pulsing sensation that is usually on one side of the head.
- Nausea, vomiting, and extreme sensitivity to light, sound, and smells. (Mayo Clinic, 2025)
- The headache can get worse with:
 - Physical activity
 - Bright lights
 - Loud noises
 - Strong odors (Cleveland Clinic, 2024)



Who Are Affected By Migraines?

- Migraines affect over one billion people worldwide (1 in 7 people).
 - About 12% of Americans have migraines (~29.5 million people).
 - Migraines can run in biological families (80% of people have relatives also affected by them).
 - Occurs more often in young adults and females.
 - Women experience migraines three times more often than men.
 - Migraines are more common in the morning.
 - Can range from infrequent, occasional attacks to chronic, daily disabling headaches.
- (Cleveland Clinic, 2024)

Types Of Migraines

- **Migraine with aura** (classic): Problems with sight, speech, and altered sensations.
- **Migraine without aura** (common): Do not have symptoms of sight, speech, and altered sensations.
- **Abdominal Migraines** (occur in children): Affects 4 in 100 children. Also, affects some adults. Symptoms include:
 - Regular attacks of moderate to severe stomach pain that last from 2-72 hours.
 - Feeling sick and vomiting during attacks.
 - No headache during attacks.
 - Feeling normal between attacks.
- **Chronic Migraine:** Having a headache at least 15 days per month with migraine symptoms, for at least 3 months (Cleveland Clinic, 2024) (Migraine Trust, 2021)

Types Of Migraines (Continued)

- **Hemiplegic Migraine:** Can cause temporary weakness on one side of the body, resulting in:
 - Visual disturbances - changes in eyesight in both eyes, such as colored spots, zigzags, or sparkles.
 - Speech difficulties – slurring words or not being able to speak clearly.
 - Communication difficulties – it can affect your ability to write and understand language. This can cause problems with reading, listening, speaking, and writing.
 - Dizziness or vertigo (a sensation of movement).
 - Hearing problems or ringing in the ears.
 - Confusion.

(Cleveland Clinic, 2024) (Migraine Trust, 2021)

Types Of Migraines (Continued)

- **Menstrual Migraine:** The attacks are linked to a women's periods (menstrual cycle).
 - Occurring 2 days prior to the start of your period, and/or up to 3 days after it starts
- **Silent Migraine (no headache):** You have the typical symptoms of a migraine but without the throbbing headache.
- **Retinal/Ocular Migraine:** Causes temporary vision problems in one eye.
- **Status Migrainosus:** The migraine attacks and symptoms last longer than 72 hours.
- **Vestibular Migraine:** In addition to the usual migraine symptoms, you experience:
 - A sensation of movement (vertigo).
 - Sensitivity to smells (osmophobia).
 - Light causing pain not just sensitivity (photoc allodynia).
 - Sensitivity to touch on the head or face (cranial allodynia). (Cleveland Clinic, 2024) (Migraine Trust, 2021)

Types Of Migraines (Continued)

- **Migraine with brainstem aura:** Headache with at least two neurological symptoms of:
 - Slurring of speech (dysarthria)
 - A sensation of movement (vertigo)
 - Ringing in the ears (tinnitus)
 - Double vision (diplopia)
 - Unsteadiness when walking as if drunk (ataxia)
 - Temporary decreased consciousness (syncope)
 - Pins and needles or numbness affecting both arms and/or legs
 - Changes in eyesight in both eyes such as patterns and flashing lights. (Cleveland Clinic, 2024)
(Migraine Trust, 2021)

MIGRAINE SYMPTOMS

PRODROME (1-2 DAYS BEFORE A MIGRAINE):



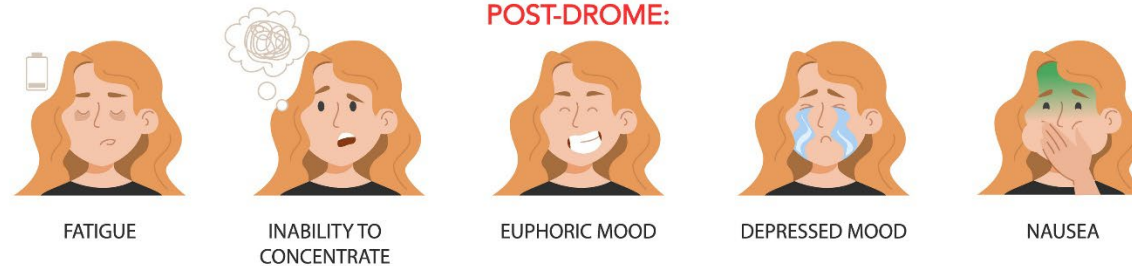
AURA (LASTS UP TO 60 MINUTES):



ATTACK (LASTS UP TO 72 HOURS):



POST-DROME:



Symptoms of Migraines

Migraine symptoms are based on the stage of the headache, and you may not experience symptoms during all four stages (Cleveland Clinic, 2024):

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

(Mayo Clinic, 2025) (MedlinePlus, 2025)
(Cleveland Clinic, 2024)

Symptoms of Migraines (Continued)

Headache attack symptoms:

- Pain gradually gets more intense
- Pain can affect one side of your head or both
- Nausea and vomiting
- Light, sound, and odor sensitivity

Postdrome symptoms:

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

(Mayo Clinic, 2025) (MedlinePlus, 2025)
(Cleveland Clinic, 2024)

Symptoms Of Migraines In Children

Symptoms in children may include:

- Head pain - can be a pulsating pain on both sides of the head.
- Stomach symptoms - frequent “tummy aches” or abdominal pain (abdominal migraines).
- Sensory issues - sensitivity to light, noise, and strong odors.
- Visual disturbances - shimmering lights, zigzags, or temporary blind spots prior to the headache.
- Other signs include dizziness, unusual paleness, fatigue, sudden irritability.

(American Migraine Foundation, 2026)

(Mayo Clinic, 2025) (MedlinePlus, 2025)

(Cleveland Clinic, 2024)



Causes (Triggers) Of Migraines

Researchers believe that migraines have a genetic cause. However, there are certain factors that can trigger migraines. These can vary from person to person, including:

- Stress
 - Anxiety
 - Hormonal changes in women
 - Bright or flashing lights
 - Loud noises
 - Strong smells
 - Medicines
 - Too much or not enough sleep
 - Sudden changes in weather or environment
 - Overexertion (too much physical activity)
 - Tobacco
 - Caffeine or caffeine withdrawal
 - Skipped meals
 - Medication overuse (taking medicine for migraines too often)
 - Dehydration
 - Skipped meals
- (Mayo Clinic, 2025) (MedlinePlus, 2025)
(Cleveland Clinic, 2024)

Causes Of Migraines (Continued)

Certain foods or ingredients can also trigger migraine headaches, especially when they are combined with other triggers. These include:

- Alcohol
- Chocolate
- Aged cheeses
- Food additives like nitrates and Monosodium glutamate (MSG)
- Some fruits and nuts
- Fermented or pickled goods
- Yeast
- Cured or processed meats (hot dogs, pepperoni)

(Mayo Clinic, 2025) (MedlinePlus, 2025)
(Cleveland Clinic, 2024)



Risk Factors Related To Migraines

The following risk factors can make you more prone to migraines:

- Family history of migraines.
- Age - Can first occur as a teenager, but tend to peak during your thirties.
- Sex - Women are three times more likely to have migraines than men.
- Hormonal changes.
- Underlying medical conditions such as depression, anxiety, sleep disorders, and epilepsy.
- Regular use of tobacco products.

(Mayo Clinic, 2025)(Cleveland Clinic, 2024)

Diagnosis

Migraines may be diagnosed after a physical and neurological exam by your provider. Your provider may order blood tests, imaging tests (MRI, CT scan), and an electroencephalogram (EEG) to rule out other causes or conditions for your headache.

To learn more about your migraines, your provider may ask you:

- 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?

(Cleveland Clinic, 2024)



Treatment

Migraine treatments are aimed at stopping symptoms and preventing future attacks.

Treatment choices depend on how often you have headaches, symptoms of nausea and vomiting, whether your headaches are disabling, and whether you have other medical conditions.

Medications to treat migraines fall into two categories:

- Pain-relieving medicines
- Preventive medicines



Pain-Relieving Treatment

Pain-relieving medicines may include (Mayo Clinic, 2025):

- Pain relievers like aspirin, ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin IB)
- Medicines that combine caffeine, aspirin, and acetaminophen (Excedrin Migraine)
- Triptans are medicines that block the pain pathways in the brain. (Imitrex, Tosymra, Maxalt, Zomig, Relpax, Frova)
- Other treatments include:
 - Dihydroergotamine (Migranal, Trudhesa)
 - Lasmiditan (Reyvow)
 - Gepants (Ubrovelvy, Nurtec ODT)
 - Intranasal zavegepant (Zavzpret)
 - Antinausea medicines (Chlorpromazine, Gimoti, Reglan, Compro)
 - Opioid and barbiturate medicines

Preventive Treatment

Preventive medicines may include (Mayo Clinic, 2025):

- Medicines that lower blood pressure (Inderal LA, InnoPran XL, Lopressor, Toprol XL, Verelan)
- Antidepressants (Amitriptyline, Nortriptyline, Effexor XR)
- Antiseizure medicines (Topamax, Qudexy XR)
- Botox Injections
- Calcitonin gene-related peptide (CGRP) and monoclonal antibodies (Aimovig, Ajovy, Emgality, Vyepti)
- Atogepant (Qultiq)
- Rimegepant (Nurtec ODT)

Managing Migraines At Home

In addition to your medications, there are some things you can do at home to feel better:

- Resting with your eyes closed in a quiet, darkened room.
- Placing a cool cloth or ice pack on your forehead.
- Drinking fluids.

Lifestyle changes can also help to reduce and/or prevent migraines, including:

- Stress management strategies (exercise, relaxation techniques, biofeedback).
- Making a log of what seems to trigger your migraines.
- Hormone therapy.
- If obese, losing weight may also be helpful.
- Natural treatments such as Vitamin B2, Coenzyme Q10, magnesium, herbs (butterbur)

(MedlinePlus, 2025)

Before starting any natural remedies or supplements, always check with your health care provider.

Community And Patient Resources

American Migraine Foundation

- Email: info@americanmigrainefoundation.org
- Weblink: <https://americanmigrainefoundation.org/>
- Phone: [929-376-1333](tel:929-376-1333)

Association of Migraine Disorders

- Weblink: <https://www.migrainedisorders.org/>
- Phone: [401-379-0466](tel:401-379-0466)

Miles for Migraines

- Weblink: <https://www.milesformigraine.org/migraine-support-community-groups/>
- Phone: [484-534-8786](tel:484-534-8786)

Pain Connection

- Weblink: <https://painconnection.org/support-groups/national-support-groups-for-chronic-pain/>
- Phone: [800-910-2462](tel:800-910-2462)

The Vestibular Disorder Support Community

- Weblink: <https://mvertigo.org/>
- Phone: [1-800-837-8428](tel:1-800-837-8428)

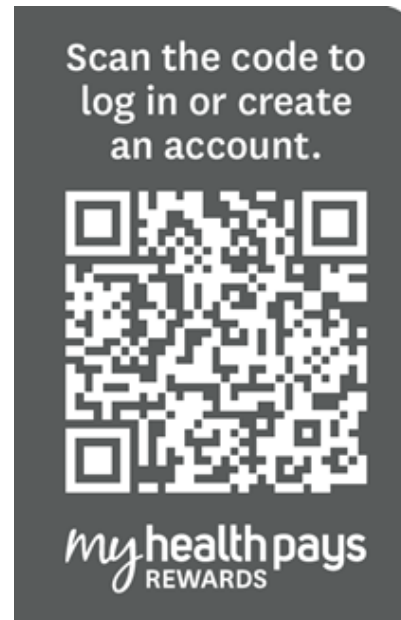
Bezzzy Migraine

- Weblink: https://www.bezzymigraine.com/?utm_source=Internal-Link&utm_campaign=Cross-Site&utm_content=HL

PA Health & Wellness Management

To learn more about My Health Pays® Rewards program or make a referral to disease management:

- Visit PAHealthWellness.com
- Call Participant Services: [1-844-626-6813](tel:1-844-626-6813) (TTY:711)
- Email: phwcasemanagement@pahealthwellness.com
- **QR Code:**



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