

MIGRAINS

Migraines are vascular headaches with reoccurring throbbing pain usually affecting one side of the head.

Classification of migraine:

CLASSICAL MIGRAINE

About 20% of all the cases have classical migraine. Classical migraine are preceded by an aura - light-headedness, sparkles or flash lights, super sensitivity to noise etc. this aura lasts for 15-45 minutes and is followed by pounding, throbbing headache.

COMMON MIGRAINE

Common migraines usually lack the aura, the warning symptoms. In common migraine the pain involves the whole head instead of just temples or one side of the head.

CAUSES

- 1) Family history.
- 2) It is more common in young females in their reproductive age. Women are affected 3 times more than man.
- 3) Between the age of 15 to 55 years.
- 4) History of motion sickness.
- 5) Stress - examination, important interview, etc.
- 6) Depression.
- 7) Poor diet.
- 8) Missing meals.
- 9) During menses.
- 10) Drugs - birth control pills.
- 11) Overexertion or fatigue after exercise or sexual activity.
- 12) Exposure to sun.
- 13) Excessive flickering light, bright light, fluorescent lights.
- 14) Excessive noise.
- 15) Watching television or a movie.
- 16) Loss of sleep or excessive sleep.
- 17) Iron deficiency.
- 18) Low blood sugar.
- 19) Vitamin B deficiency.
- 20) On withdrawal from caffeine.
- 21) Specific food allergies:
 - a. Ice-creams, cold food.
 - b. Chocolates.
 - c. Cheese.
 - d. Bread.
 - e. Wine, alcohol.
 - f. Food additives.
 - g. Monosodium glutamate (used in cooking Chinese food).
 - h. Aspartame (nutrasweet).
 - i. Chicken liver.
 - j. Pickled herring, pickles.
 - k. Canned figs, canned food.

- l. Nitrates (used in curded meats like sausages, salami, hot dogs).
- m. Sour cream.
- Shellfish.
- Fatty fried food.
 - 1) Lactose (milk and milk products).
 - 2) These are the common food allergens but one can be allergic to other food items not listed.

DIETARY MANAGEMENT

Avoid:

- Avoid stress and learn to cope with it. Practice yoga will help to deal with stress.
- Avoid smoking or even being around a cigar or a cigarette smoke.
 - 1) Avoid alcohol, red wine champagne.
 - 2) Avoid coffee and caffeinated drinks. The more caffeine you consume more chances of having headaches.
 - 3) Sources of caffeine: coffee, tea, soft drinks, chocolate.
 - 4) Do not suddenly stop caffeine intake, you may get withdrawal symptoms. Reduce caffeine intake gradually.
 - 5) Do not drink or eat anything that has artificial sweeteners.
 - 6) Avoid canned foods and food with preservatives, foods with artificial colors.
 - 7) Avoid food you are allergic to. If you don't know what food triggers the migraine, avoid foods listed above.
 - 8) Avoid monosodium glutamate, used in Chinese cooking.
 - 9) Avoid missing meals or fasting.
 - 10) Do not over eat.
 - 11) Avoid overexertion. Do regular moderate exercise.
 - 12) Avoid going out in sun; carry an umbrella or dark glasses when out in sun.
 - 13) Avoid taking pain killers and oral contraceptives.
 - 14) Avoid all perfumes, scented laundry detergents, deodorants, air fresheners, candles, shampoo etc.

DO'S

- a. Keep a diary to record when your headache occurs, symptoms, what you had eaten before the headache started, your food craving that that period, your sleep patterns, menstrual cycle and other factors. This will help you to find out what triggers your migraine, so that you can avoid that factor and prevent migraine.
- b. Consume plenty of water.
- c. During the attack a cold compressant may help you if your migraine is not caused by cold. Lie in a dark quite room without a pillow. Take complete bed rest with minimal light, noise and odors.
- d. Do regular exercise, it prevents migraine attacks.
- e. Get a regular massage around the neck and shoulders to relieve the tension in the muscles.
- f. Proper rest and sleep is needed for prevention of migraine attacks.
- g. Eat proper balanced diet.
- h. Eat at regular time.
- i. Eat frequent small meals and snacks through out the day, to maintain blood sugar levels.
 - i. Eat high protein meals regularly.
 - ii. Avoid eating sweets.

- j. Eat organic food, fresh fruits and vegetables.
- k. Limit intake of fats. It should be below 30% of your total calorie intake.
- l. Increase intake of omega 3 fatty acids. Omega 3 has tremendous effects on migraine. Especially the EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid), it helps in production of thromboxane A₃, which plays important role in controlling migraine, it makes the blood less sticky and thus blood flows with out resistance and it produces prostaglandins (a hormone like substance) that reduces inflammation of the blood vessels.
- m. Increase intake of omega 3 fatty acids and reduce intake of omega 6 fatty acids (ratio of 2:1), omega 3 fatty acid has anti-inflammatory properties.
 - 1) Consume lots of vitamin B complex, helps to control blood sugars. They also help in release of energy which boosts up the immune system.
 - 2) Increase intake of iron, iron deficiency cause headaches.
 - 3) Calcium and vitamin D are helpful in reducing headaches especially headaches after menses.
- a. Increase intake of magnesium, magnesium deficiency causes spasms of muscles also of the smooth muscles in the lining of the blood vessels. Thus magnesium will relax the vessels in the blood vessels and allow the blood to flow freely.
- b. Sources of Vitamin A: all yellow fruits and vegetables contain Vitamin A. Meat, fish, kidney and liver, liver oils of fish like cod, shark are richest source of vitamin A
- c. Eat food rich in zinc:
- d. Consume carbohydrates with proteins.
- e. Limit intake of simple carbohydrates: sugar, all sugary foods, alcohol, soda etc.
- f. Take high fiber diet, take 12-20 gm of fiber - whole grains, bran, oat, green leafy vegetables, peas, beans, potatoes, raw vegetables, salads, dried fruits and fresh fruits.
- g. Eat fruits and vegetables with the skin.
- h. Include food rich in Vitamin E:
- i. You can consume feverfew, an herb that is said to alleviate migraine pains, it gives temporary relief but will not cure migraine.

CONSULT YOUR PHYSICIAN

- a. Consult your physician or professional dietician before making any dietary changes.
- b. Take vitamin supplements under the guidance of your physician.
- c. If your headache is accompanied with severe vomiting, weakness, visual problems then see your physician immediately.
- d. If you get too frequent attacks of migraine consult your physician.
- e. If your headache is with vomiting, fever and intolerance to light it can be meningitis consult physician as soon as possible.
- f. If you develop weakness or paralysis of one side or any part of the body, following a headache consult your physician.

NOTE : PLEASE CONTACT WITH YOUR DOCTOR FOR EXACT DIET FOR THE HEALTH PRBLEMS YOU HAVE.THIS A SAMPLE DIET CHART TO GET THE IDEA OF YOUR DAILY ROUTINE FOOD INTAKE TO MAKE YOUR LIFE HEALTHY .