

PART

2

HEADACHE AND MIGRAINE- BASICS

EVERY PERSON WITH A HEADACHE OR
MIGRAINE SHOULD KNOW THIS

THIS BOOKLET GIVES A BRIEF INFORMATION ABOUT
HEADACHES AND MIGRAINE AND WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

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PART 2



HEADACHE AND MIGRAINE- BASICS

EVERY PERSON WITH A HEADACHE OR MIGRAINE
SHOULD KNOW THIS

DR SAUMYA H MITTAL

*Dedicated To People With
Migraine Everywhere*

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SECTION I
ABOUT HEADACHE AND MIGRAINE

WHAT IS HEADACHE?

Headache is one of the commonest symptoms across the globe. Almost everyone has had headache at least once in their lifetime. It may stand alone or may be a part of the symptom complex of some other disease. Therefore it is essential that the diagnosis is correct so that a useful treatment can be extended to the person suffering with headache. A proper unhurried description of the symptoms and a good examination is therefore important before a targeted testing can be done to offer an accurate treatment to the person.

There may be several reasons of developing a headache-

1. Increased pressure inside the skull affecting the brain.
2. Irritation and infection of the coverings of the brain.
3. Stressed and overworking muscles of the neck and skull.
4. Abnormal involvement of the blood vessels of the brain.
5. Irritation of the nerves and their covering.

The brain of the person with migraine is sensitive to many things that do not affect others.

PERSON 1: I HAD HEADACHE; DOCTOR TOLD ME I HAD A MIGRAINE.

PERSON 2: I HAD HEADACHE; DOCTOR TOLD ME I HAD BRAIN HEMORRHAGE.

WHY THE DIFFERENCE?

Headache is a symptom. The symptom can be present in many diseases. The nature, the type of headache, the associated symptoms of headache and even the treatment of headache can vary with the diagnosis that is made by the doctor. Headaches, depending on their cause, can be divided into 'primary headaches' or 'secondary headaches'. Both, 'primary headaches' and 'secondary headaches' include numerous different types of headaches.

Secondary headaches are the ones that occur due to some other cause. In other words they are secondary to some other reason. These can include causes like brain haemorrhage, brain tumours, brain infections like meningitis and tuberculomas etc.

On the other hand, primary headaches are ones that do not have any cause identified. In these cases, scans and other tests are all normal and do not yield any significant result except telling us that there is no secondary cause. The tests may sometimes be done if the doctor feels that there may be some other reason causing the headache.

PRIMARY HEADACHES	SECONDARY HEADACHES
This is said to occur when the headache and its associated symptoms form the syndrome.	This is said to occur when headache and symptoms develop due to other diseases and factors.
Examples include Migraine, Tension Headaches, Cluster Headaches	Examples include Brain Haemorrhage, Brain Tumour, Brain Infections etc

INTERESTING FACTS

The brain does not feel pain. It is largely the coverings of the brain that are painful.

HOW DO I KNOW THAT MY HEADACHE IS NOT A SAFE HEADACHE?

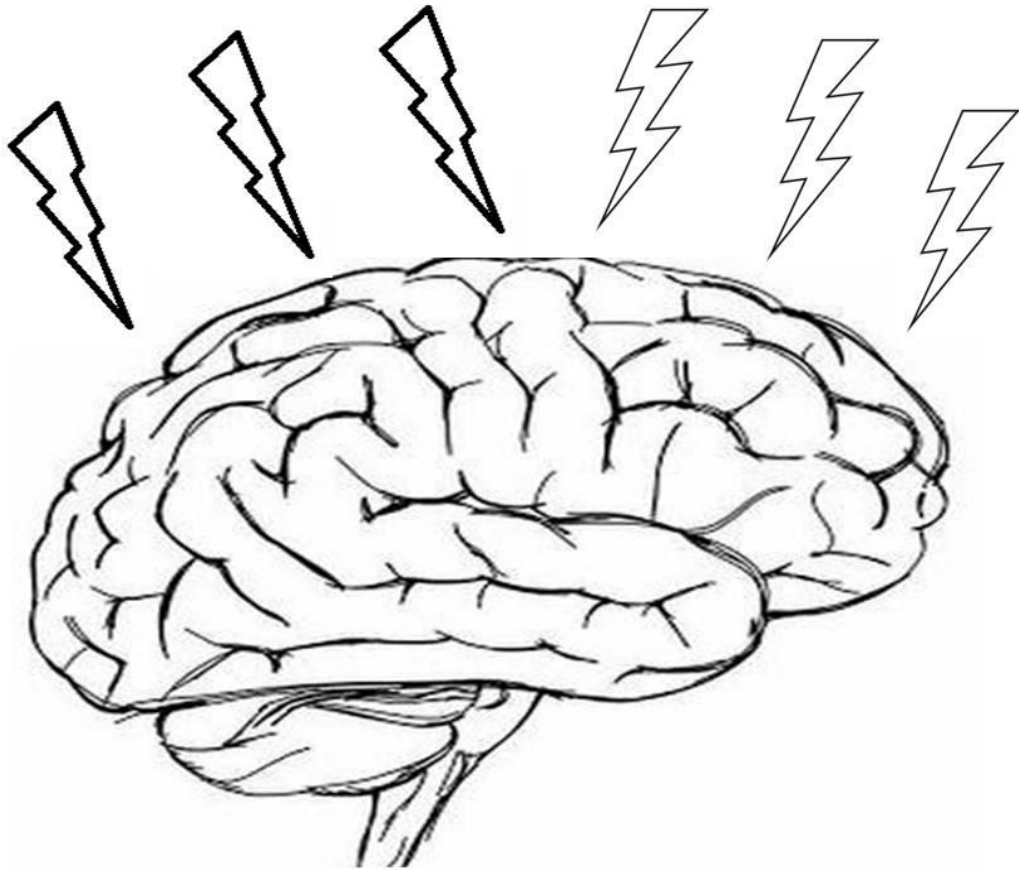
In every person suffering with headache, the doctor and the patient worries and fears whether the symptom arises from a life threatening cause. More so because frequently a headache that looks like primary headache can turn out to be a secondary headache as it progresses or when an imaging or other test is done. Some common questions and features that may indicate a Secondary Headache include-

RED FLAG SYMPTOMS
NEW ONSET OF HEADACHE.
SUDDEN ONSET OF HEADACHE.
FIRST HEADACHE EVER.
WORST HEADACHE EVER.
CHANGE IN PATTERN OF HEADACHE.
PROGRESSIVELY WORSENING HEADACHE.
HEADACHE STARTING AFTER AGE OF 50 YEARS.
HEADACHE THAT INCREASE ON CHANGE IN POSITION.
HEADACHE WITH OTHER NEUROLOGICAL SYMPTOMS.
HEADACHE WITH SOME OTHER SYSTEMIC FEATURE EG FEVER, COUGH ETC.
HEADACHE IN A PERSON WITH SOME KNOWN PRIOR DISEASE LIKE CANCER, TB ETC.

WHAT IS MIGRAINE?

Migraine is a form of primary headache. It is by far the most common form of primary headache that people across the globe come across. It is a form of headache where the person has recurrent episodes of headache and its associated symptoms. It involves both the genders, even though females are more frequently affected with it. The migraine headaches can involve any age group, inclusive of children and elderly. And therefore it becomes more dangerous- because the other possibly dangerous causes of headaches will need to be ruled out.

The frequency of headache and its severity can gradually increase. This can increase till a person has very frequent headache and lead to what is known as “Chronic Migraine”, leading to addition of regular medications. While ‘Chronic Migraine’ suggests that the person has a lot of headaches (at least up to eight headaches in a month), it is not necessary that every headache is a severe one. Even mild headaches are included in ‘Chronic Migraine’. This can be reversed once the number of headaches reduces with intake of regular medications.



Courtesy: <https://in.pinterest.com/pin/brain-imaging-at-multiple-size-scales-14073817565054427/>

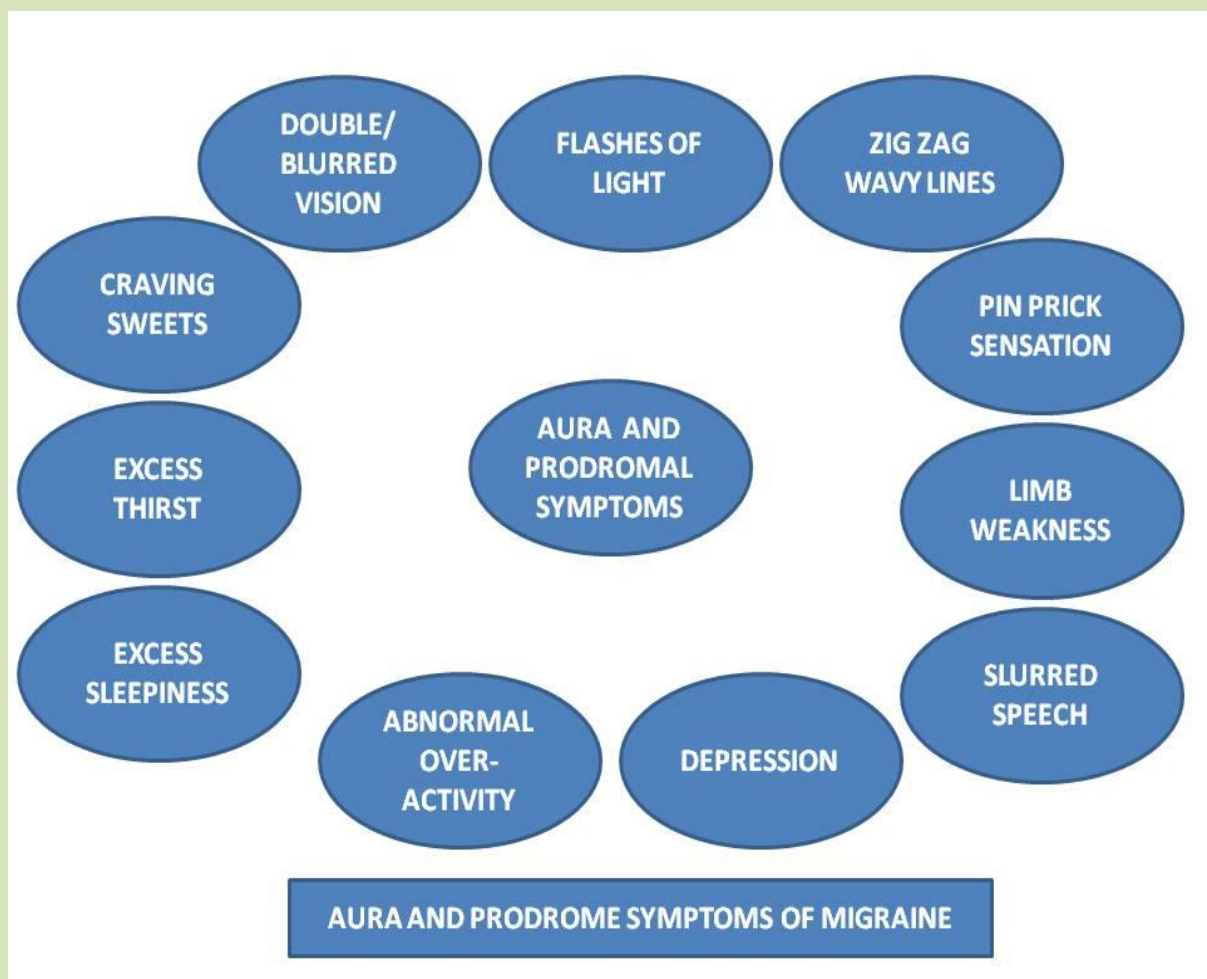
INTERESTING FACTS

Migraine is largely divided into

- A. Episodic Headache: This is the event of headache.
- B. Chronic Headache: This is the overall frequency of headache.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF MIGRAINE?

A person may get a few symptoms before the development of the headache, like seeing flashes of light, seeing zig-zag wavy lines, feeling sense of pin pricks or tingling, weakness of limbs, double or blurred vision, slurred speech, dizziness, vertigo etc. These are called 'Aura Symptoms'. The symptoms are present for a variable period of time before the headache. However, these make the diagnosis more difficult because all of these symptoms mimic stroke, another common condition across the globe that can have severe effects. Some other symptoms may be felt e.g. an excessive thirst, a sense of

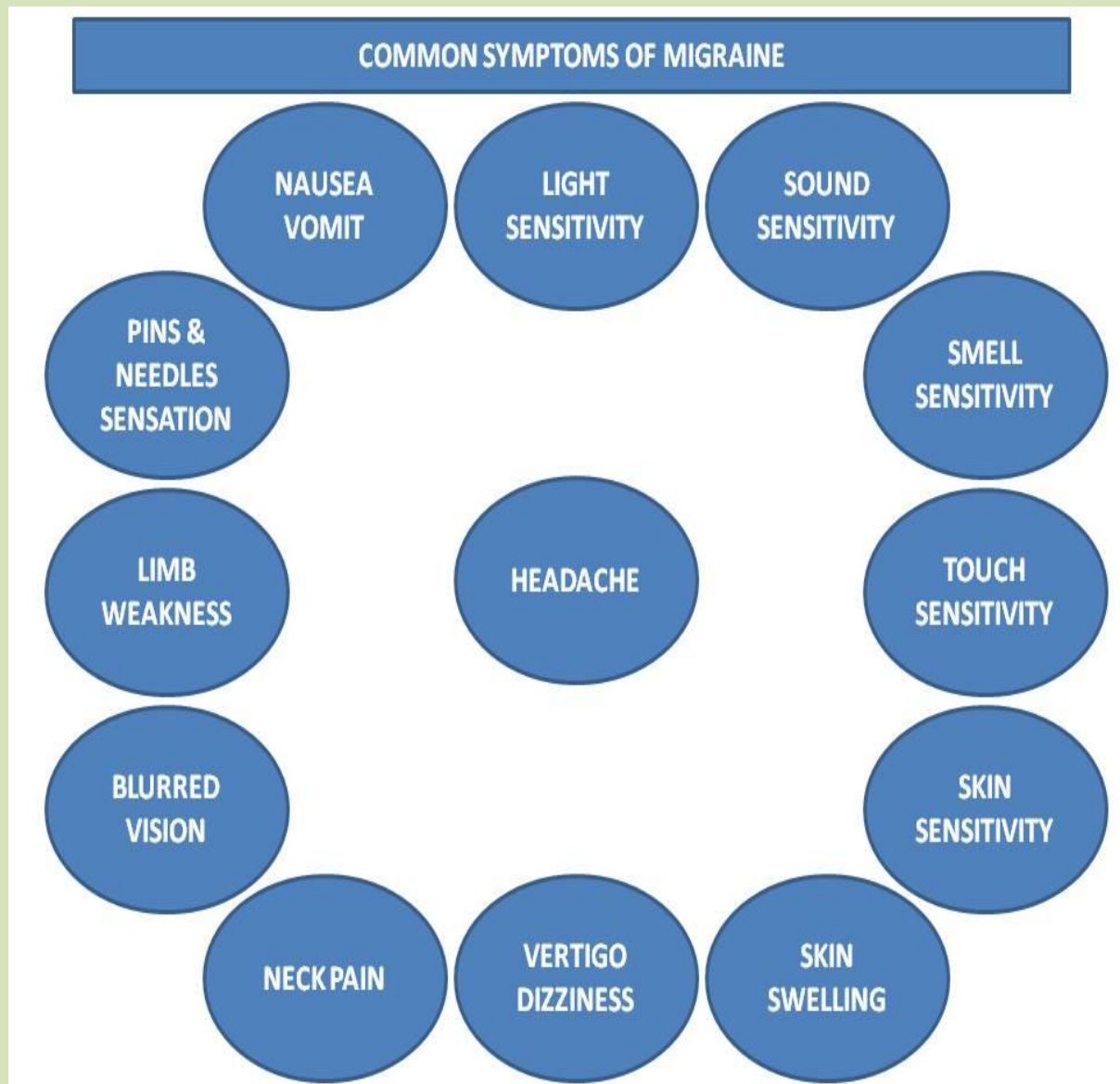


sleepiness, a craving for sweets, abnormal feeling of a sense of ease at work or depression. These are known as 'Prodromal Symptoms'.

While symptoms of Aura and Prodromal Symptoms may occur before the migraine episode starts, they may not overlap with the migraine episode. However, none of these symptoms are diagnostic of a migraine.

The symptoms of migraine include a headache. This headache is usually, but not always, one sided and throbbing type of pain which lasts more than 4 hours and as long as 3 days. The headache can be worsened by physical activity, by light, and by sound exposure.

The headache is the chief symptom of migraine. The other symptoms include nausea, vomiting, skin tenderness at the location of the headache, light-headedness, stiffness and tenderness of neck and blurred vision. Sensitivity to light, sound, touch and smell may be associated. Sense of light-headedness, stiffness or pain in the neck may be associated to the headache. Some people feel they have stuffy nose and this often leads to a diagnosis of sinusitis instead of migraine. Resting is important during the headache episode. Additional activity and exertion can increase the intensity of the headache and migraine. The symptoms described as a part of aura may well continue in the migraine episode or occur individually in addition to the other migraine symptoms.



Not all symptoms are present in all the patients. Most patients have a variable combination of these symptoms.

INTERESTING FACTS

While blurring of vision and photophobia are symptoms of Migraine, redness of eye and tears from eyes suggest Cluster Headaches.

WHY DOES A MIGRAINE OCCUR?

There is no clear mechanism that defines why migraine develops. There are only theories as to why it may develop. But none of these theories are confirmed.

The most widely popular theory is a chemical-vascular based theory. The working of the brain largely depends on chemicals and the electric signals that generate through these chemicals. One of these chemicals is called serotonin. When the levels of serotonin reduce in the brain, the blood vessels become broader in diameter. These expanded blood vessels may compress the neighbouring nerve tissues. This compression may cause a headache.

However, as already mentioned, this is just a theory. There's no absolute confirmation.

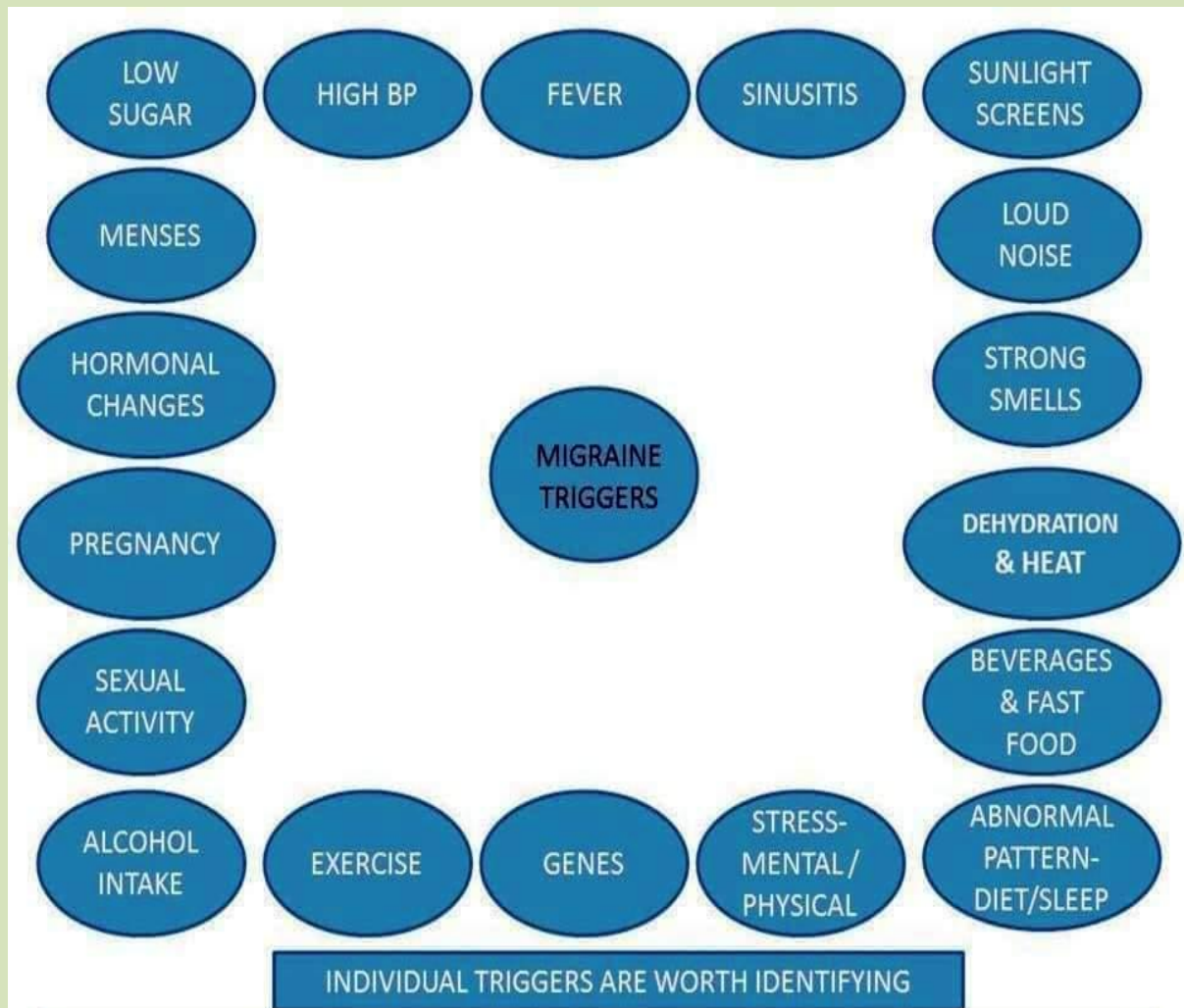
Genetics also plays a significant role. In fact presence of a close family member having a headache/migraine suggests strongly that the person getting a consultation may have a migraine. This isn't a frivolous question and many people do not take this question seriously. However, as explained, always inform this carefully to your doctor.

WHAT ARE THE TRIGGERS OF MIGRAINE?

Triggers are individual agents that can cause or increase the headache and its severity in a person. These triggers are commonly outside the body, but a few of them may be seen within the body itself.

Triggers can include- stress, hormonal changes, missed meals, weather issues like severe cold or heat, sleep related issues, strong odours, alcohol consumption, food consumption typically fast food, muscle and psychological tension, tiredness, light, sound, and menstruation.

Identification of triggers is important. The triggers are individual. In that, every person has a different set of triggers and a careful review of the days before the onset of a headache would help identify a person's individual trigger. Avoidance and control of triggers can significantly reduce the frequency and the intensity of headaches thereby reducing the consumption of pain killers significantly and avoids the loss of function amongst people who can successfully identify and avoid their triggers.



INTERESTING FACTS:

Stress and Tension are triggers for migraine. But they can also cause Tension Type Headache.

WHAT OTHER CONDITIONS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH MIGRAINE?

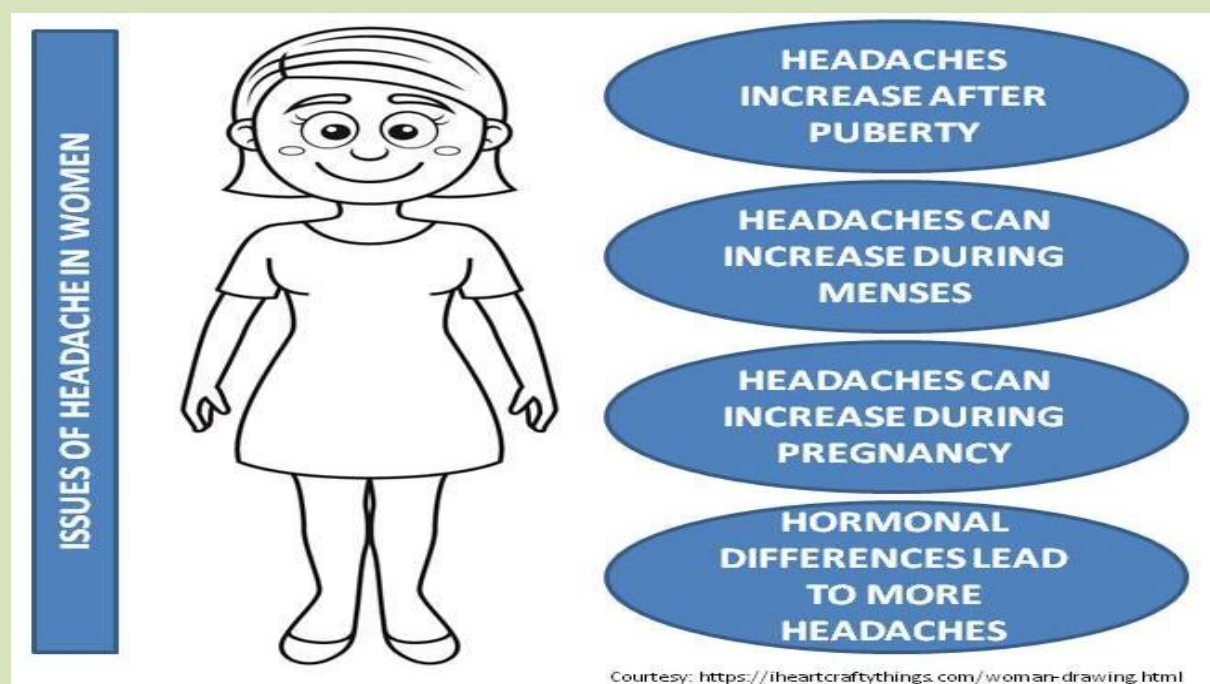
Headaches and migraines are often associated with other conditions. These conditions may exacerbate the headache symptoms or may be seen commonly in patients with migraine.

SOME CONDITIONS THAT MAY BE ASSOCIATED WITH MIGRAINE HEADACHE
ANXIETY
DEPRESSION
FIBROMYALGIA
MOOD DISORDERS
BIPOLAR DISORDERS
STROKE
EPILEPSY
ASTHMA
HYPERTENSION
SLEEP DISORDERS
MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS
RESTLESS LEG SYNDROME
IRRITABLE BOWEL SYNDROME

WHAT ARE THE SPECIAL ISSUES OF MIGRAINE IN WOMEN?

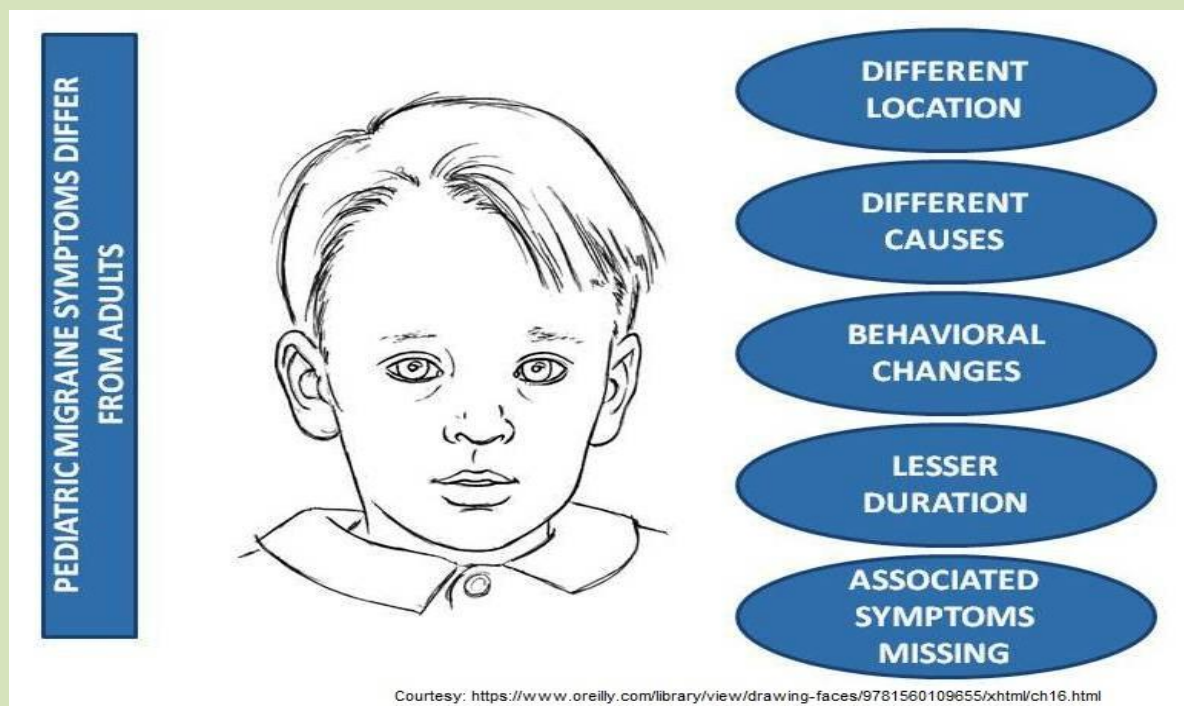
Migraine headaches are more common in females especially after puberty. It is assumed that the normal hormonal changes in the body during and since puberty may be responsible for this increased frequency of migraine headaches in the ladies. In fact, many women develop a migraine headache during menstruation. This headache may start 2-3 days before and end 2-3 days after the menses. The menstrual related headache may occur individually, without occurrence of headaches at other times, or it may be associated with normal migraines during the non-menstrual period. The lowest risk of headache is around ovulation.

This condition is often missed due to a social and psychological barrier that is associated with the topic of menstruation.



HOW IS MIGRAINE DIFFERENT IN CHILDREN?

Headaches are seen in children also. Frequently they have different causes of headache compared to adults. Weak eyes, fever, cold and sinusitis are possibly more common in children. However, migraine can occur in children also. The symptoms of the headache in children are however different. The headaches can be of shorter duration compared to adults and the other symptoms need not always be present. Similarly the location of the headache can vary. Behavioural changes need to be observed in children because they may not be able to identify the sensitivity to light and sound directly. The frequency of headaches is higher in teenagers. Also, in children, boys are affected more than girls, till the age of puberty. The headache in the children may commonly be relieved with sleep.



WHAT ARE THE TREATMENT OPTIONS FOR MIGRAINE?

Most of the formal medical consultations for headaches and migraines are taken late. A simple disdain to the symptom of headache is often the cause of this delay. Ease of availability of 'Over the counter medications' is another cause of delay. A lot of people simply have a lack of knowledge about conditions like headaches e.g. headaches in children or in women.

To a large extent pain killers are offered to the patients of headache and migraine. The pain killer may be a general painkiller or specific to migraine. Availability of the specific pain killers is quickly becoming easy, at least in the urban areas. However, pain killers only terminate the acute event – “Episodic Migraine”.

When a person has a high headache frequency - “Chronic Migraine”, regular medications are given to reduce the frequency and the intensity of the headaches. These medications are taken for a period of time so as to reduce the headache frequency. A consultation is needed with your doctor regarding the need, efficacy, drug selection and duration of this therapy.

INTERESTING FACTS

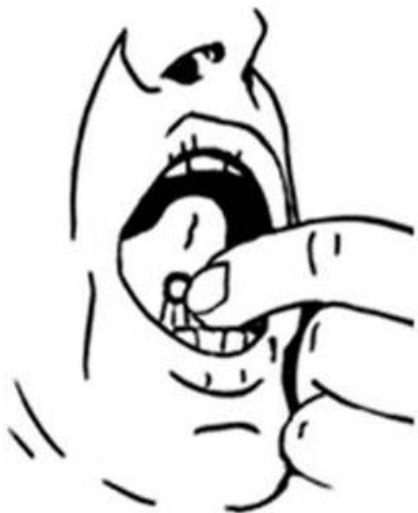
Excessive use of pain killers can lead to Medication Overuse Headache.

IS THERE A CURE FOR HEADACHE AND MIGRAINE?

The cure for headache depends on the correct identification of the cause of headache. The treatment of the cause is what would give a cure of the headache. For example, a patient who has brain haemorrhage may have only partial and incomplete relief from headache till the complete resolution of the brain haemorrhage.

An exact cause of headache in migraine is not yet known. The people who have migraine therefore do not have a cure as yet. However, in a vast majority of cases, a good control can be offered to them with the appropriate use of the available medications.

TREATMENT OPTIONS INCLUDE-



**PAIN KILLERS TO
TERMINATE THE
HEADACHE**

**PROPHYLAXIS
TO REDUCE
HEADACHE
FREQUENCY**

Courtesy: <https://www.news-medical.net/drugs/Abstral-sublingual-tablets.aspx>

ARE THERE ANY POSSIBLE DO'S AND DONT'S DURING THE HEADACHE?

Some easy ways to help yourself during an attack of headache are-

1. Try to keep calm.
2. Rest, if possible sleep, in a cool, dark and silent room.
3. Avoid physical exercise; screen (computer/mobile).
4. Avoid food items that are your triggers.
5. Eat light. Avoid fasting. Gastritis may increase the headache.
6. Relaxing music or light reading help some people.
7. Take your painkiller as suggested by your doctor. Usually taking them at the time of Aura or Prodrome, or just at the onset of headache is useful.
8. Use of a cold pack on head can be helpful.
9. Keep yourself hydrated as best as you can. Manage intake so as to avoid vomiting.
10. As soon as the headache ends, make a note in your headache diary.
11. Breathe slowly and calmly. It helps relieve stress and also the nausea.
12. Loose clothes and fresh air help relax the headache, tension and nausea.

INTERESTING FACTS

Transcranial Magnetic Stimulators are newer non pharmacological modalities for migraine treatment.

SECTION II
QUESTIONS FROM THE MIGRAINE PATIENTS

I / MY CHILD DEVELOP HEADACHES DURING EXAM. HOW CAN I HELP IT?

Exams are always stressful. They are a part of life that everyone reading this book would have faced in some part of their life. Everyone has experienced it. And yet, somehow, everyone forgets the stress that was faced during the exams.

The pressure of doing well is tremendous, traditionally in more mature classes, but nonetheless seen in younger age groups as well. The altered and haphazard pattern of sleeping is frequent. The pattern, timing of eating food and the food selection itself goes from healthy to convenient and often abnormal. An additional intake of coffee or tea is frequent to keep oneself awake. And both can lead to significant gastritis. Excess amounts of screen gazing- traditionally larger screens of laptops were in use. However, as the convenience and accessibility increases, the use of mobile screens and the resultant smaller font size increases the eye strain. Prolonged stooped fixed postures and bent necks have no mercy on the musculature.

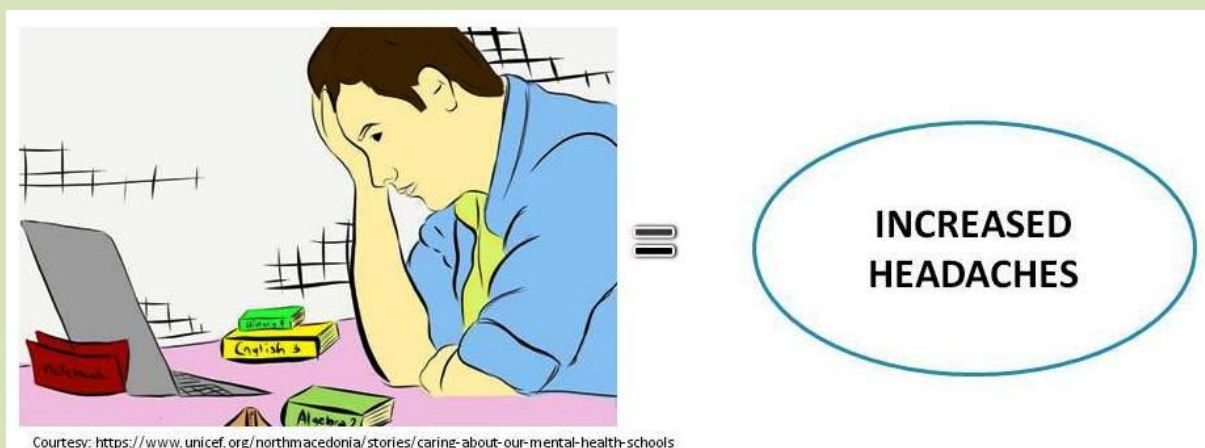
All these factors can only become trigger of headache in the children and young adults with migraine.

To avoid these headaches, make sure a healthy diet and sleeping pattern is maintained. Limit the intake of stimulants like coffee and tea. Do not skip meals or delay them.

Make sure you have a good comfortable chair and the height of the table is suitable. Control and watch your screen time. A simple break or alternating books with screen time may be useful.

Understand your own or your child's signs of stress. You can always talk about it to friends and family if a counsellor is not available. Signs of stress in children are more subtle. These are different in children. Changes in the behaviour or avoiding activities that are otherwise enjoyed are simple clues. A simple break, some music and indulgence in a hobby can help. All work and no play make Jack a dull boy.

Finally, always remember, it's just an exam. Stress is always there. But there's always more to life than just exams.



I WAS TOLD I HAVE MIGRAINE AND I AM OVERWEIGHT. WILL REDUCING THE WEIGHT HELP?

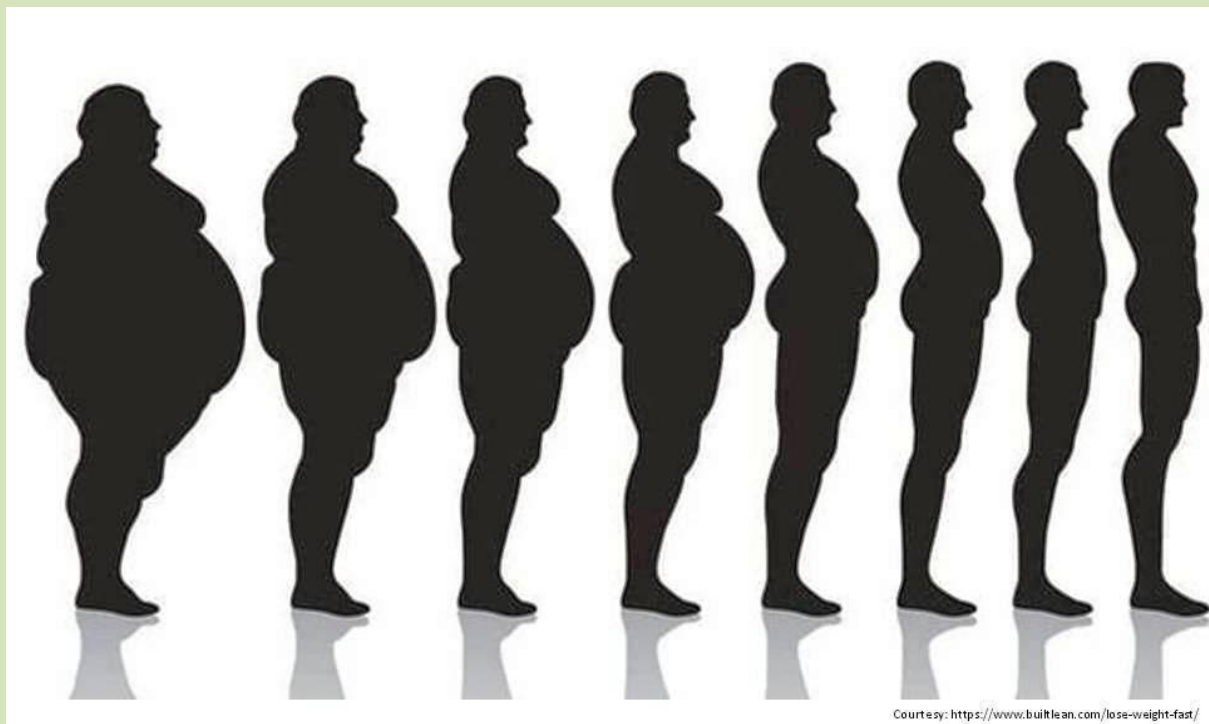
It has been found that obesity will increase the chances of developing migraine. It also possibly increases the frequency of headaches. If a person is having too many headaches, the frequency of taking painkillers increases too. Together, the increased number of headaches and the associated increased intake of painkillers lead to 'Chronic Migraine'.

How and why obesity leads to an increase in migraine headaches is uncertain. Choice of foods in the regular diet may be one of the reasons that can cause both obesity and trigger a headache. A feeling of fatigue may be another reason that may induce headache. Social, psychological and behavioural issues related to obesity may link the obesity with headache. Development of other illnesses like high blood pressure (hypertension) can result in triggering the headache especially while undetected. Obesity causes inflammation in the body. This inflammation itself may cause neurological stress.

Loss of weight can significantly help reduce the frequency of headaches. However, the way the weight is being reduced is also important. Take for example someone who starts fasting to reduce weight. The act of fasting itself may trigger a headache. Similarly, a very vigorous schedule of exercise will also lead to a headache in a person with migraine. So effectively, a gradual loss of

weight with a regular exercise regime and a healthy dietary pattern is more desirable. A high fluid intake will not only help in dietary modifications, it will also help rehydrate after that exercise schedule. And remember, dehydration is a trigger for headache in migraine.

Some researchers believe that having too low a weight can also be associated with developing migraine.



I LIKE MY SPORTS. BUT IT TRIGGERS MY HEADACHES. WHAT CAN I DO?

Sports and vigorous exercises can cause migraines and induce headaches. These headaches may occur before the sports activity, during the activity and can increase in intensity as the game proceeds. They are not always related to 'performance pressure'. Even learners of a sport can develop a headache. And for a professional player, these headaches can be a major hurdle. A mild headache can preclude your efforts at giving your best and severe headache can lead to a devastating performance. Strain on the muscles and pressure on the arteries lead to these headaches.

To avoid these headaches, one needs to identify why the headaches are developing. The exposure to excessive light and sound makes one uncomfortable. Performance pressure and expectation are other possible triggers in professional sports. Informing your team members and managers is advisable so that an alternative plan is ready if you develop an incapacitating headache.

Talk to your doctor. A careful examination, sometimes inclusive of imaging tests like MRI, make sure that more serious conditions like brain tumours, brain haemorrhages, brain infections and other diseases are not affecting your performance. Medications may be initiated to take prior to the event so as to avoid the headache once these dangerous diseases are ruled out.

I GET A MIGRAINE WHENEVER I AM IN AIR CONDITIONER. WHY?

Cold air and wind often cause a headache, more so in a migraine patient.

Similarly, air conditioners can also cause headache.

The air conditioner can cause a significant noise. Yes, what commonly goes unnoticed is the noise made by air conditioner. However, for a person who is facing a migraine headache, the sound is quite clearly audible. Also, commonly the units are left unclean and this leads to accumulation of dirt, allergens and can lead to a smelly room. As already mentioned, sound and smell sensitivity increases in people with migraine. So the intensity of pain would increase as well.

Air conditioners also cause significant dryness of the air. This is a significant cause of headache amongst those in whom dry air is trigger. In such cases, longer the duration of exposure to dry air, more are the chances of developing headache.

A rapid change in the temperature is also a trigger for headache. Therefore it is always better to let your body adapt to the temperature gradually rather than walking into a pre-cooled room. A well maintained and newer generation air conditioners (apparently less noisy) are a better option for people who have a migraine and cannot avoid air conditioning.

WHY DOES MY WORK ON COMPUTERS AND MOBILES TRIGGER MY HEADACHES?

Too much of a screen time can trigger a possible headache, especially if a person has light sensitivity as a trigger. Prolonged gazing of the screen can result in triggering a headache and increasing the severity of the headache. The number of people with migraine who have had screen as a trigger of their headache has been variable, but varies anywhere between 20-80%. Amongst people who have had to use computers, tablets and mobiles professionally and for study purposes, the number is higher.

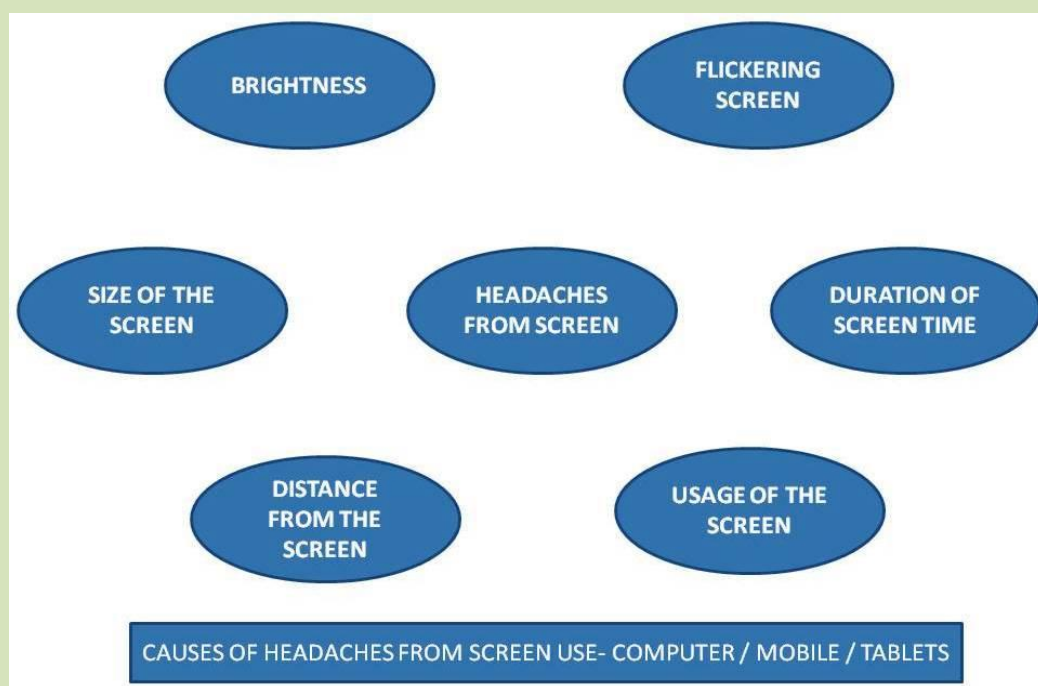
This may be more common due to the following reasons-

1. The brightness of the screen can make one very uncomfortable. This may be more uncomfortable if the person using the screen is in a dark environment, compared to the brightness of the screen. Use of anti glare shield and anti glare glasses may help. Blue light blockage is also known to be a useful measure.
2. The usage of the screen is important too. Use of screen for games, movies and other activities in which there is a continuous change in brightness and colours can be troublesome, especially if one already has a headache. Avoid viewing movies etc on small screens. Larger screens may be more comfortable.

3. The duration for which the exposure to screen occurs is also important.

Where some people report a higher frequency of headache due to prolonged gazing, others have noted a trigger of headache even with cumulative prolonged screen exposure. Take regular breaks from the screen. A coffee time, for example in an office, is a perfect way to massage those sore eyes.

4. Distance at which the screen is kept may also make a difference. At least 2-3 feet distance is recommended
5. The size of the screen can also trigger a headache. A larger screen allows the image created in the eye to be larger, making it more comfortable and easier to view.
6. Flickering from the screen may also be a reason for the trigger of headaches. Screen should therefore be in good condition.



I AM A TRAVELLER. HOWEVER, TRAVELLING E.G. IN A FLIGHT, A TRAIN OR A CAR TRIGGERS MY MIGRAINE. WHY?

A lot of people have to travel. This may be related to their work, leisure or otherwise. Now, travelling for those who enjoy it, can be fun. However, for a person for migraine, it can be a, well, pain.

Travelling needs you to be more alert. You may need to wake up early to start your travel. A need to relax may be hampered by the limited opportunities. And there is always the possibility of delay. So, it is advisable to plan your travel such that you need not wake up especially for it and are thus comfortable travelling. For those who can sleep in positions other than the lying down condition, sleep mask should be taken along, if one isn't driving.

It can be a noisy experience for a person with migraine. Horns of cars and engines, roars of jets and a general din at the airports, platforms and bus-stops can be troublesome. The use of noise cancelling headphones may be useful. But hey, don't miss that announcement.

Travelling means packing. And packing means luggage. And lifting the luggage causes muscle strain, especially those of the neck, back and shoulders. And physical stress, as we know, can trigger a headache. Besides, let's not forget the mental stress of taking care of the luggage, and often family. Reaching on

time and avoiding the possibility of being late is another cause of mental stress. So travel with time to spare. Know about your destination and plan ahead for cab services, hotel services etc to further reduce stress. Practice relaxation techniques if needed.

Travelling also means that one is in nature. This includes sunlight, sounds, smells and a trigger for every other sensory organ which is sensitive and can trigger a migraine headache. Use of sunglasses, comfortable clothes, hats, and smelling oils may help.

Keep yourself hydrated. It is easy to not be mindful of the fluid intake or a skipped or delayed meal. Carrying some provisions may be a useful option to avoid the trigger of headache.

And make sure you have packed your medications, for headaches and otherwise. If advised by your doctor, take them as instructed to avoid the headaches. Long journey's can be taxing if you have a headache, especially if you are driving.

INTERESTING FACTS

Acupressure, a Chinese form of healing, when performed at particular points in head and wrist are said to reduce the headache and feeling of vomiting.

I DEVELOP A HEADACHE WHENEVER I GO TO A PARTY. WHAT CAN I DO?

A party, again, has all the factors that can trigger a migraine- flashing lights, loud music, a general din, fast food and a tendency to have delay in sleep and eating food. The instinct to look good, socialize appropriately, get a good acceptable gift etc also creates a possibility of mental stress.

The solution to avoid headaches is simple. Follow a proper diet pattern. Eat a good balanced diet. A slight snack before going to the party would help avoid the hunger pangs that could trigger the headache. It would also help watch what you eat at the party.

Avoid your triggers though it may not always be possible. If you feel a headache coming, find a quiet corner that would protect you from excess light, flashing lights and loud music.

Keep yourself hydrated.

INTERESTING FACTS

Ginger can help reduce nausea and vomit. It can be taken in the form of ginger ale, ginger candy, ginger tea etc.

CAN I DRIVE WHEN I HAVE A MIGRAINE ATTACK?

It is quite common for the people with migraine headache to try and cope up with their daily activities. They try different ways to adapt to their normal life to try and perform their routine work, sometimes for the sake of the people who depend on their effective working.

However, all the while, they have may be nursing a severe and nasty headache. Unfortunately, the advice that people get just includes headache medicines. Their individual needs may not be answered. One of the common questions that comes up is- "Can I drive?" This is not a simple answer.

During a headache of migraine, a person has a lot of sensitivity to the light. Sunlight is the brightest source of light there is. Similarly, the sounds disturb a person and even increase their pain. And a lot of communication happens through honking on roads. Driving exposes one to sunlight and a lot of sound, both of which can increase the headache severity significantly.

A person is generally feeling weak, nauseous, and tense. There are a lot of people who have vertigo associated with headache. A lot of people are unable to sleep well due to the headache. All this makes the person a bit dull. Driving needs a certain level of quick response. Reflexes need to be sharp. However, a person who is having a severe headache will not be as quick.

The thinking process is also not as quick. Some people who have taken medicines for the headache may feel its side effects. These may include drowsiness and nausea. A person who is suffering with these symptoms may make a wrong judgement.

A 'Traffic Light System' of pain assessment by every person who has headache is suggested. In this the headache has been broadly divided into 3 types-

Green Light- There is headache, but does not restrict activity.

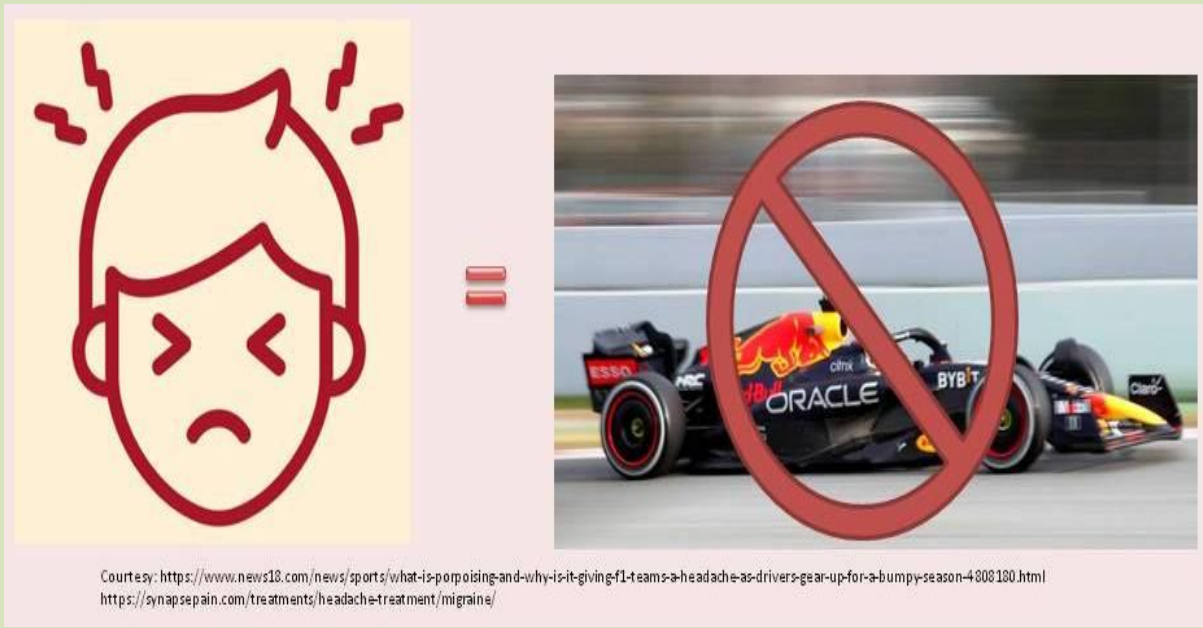
Yellow Light- There is headache, and it demands care, and slowing down.

Red Light- There is headache and it is severe enough to take rest.

Taking the decision may be guided by this.

But certain activities increase the severity of the headache. Therefore, it is advisable to not drive when one has a headache. Taking a friend's or colleague's help to drive or hiring a taxi may be a better and safer alternative.





INTERESTING FACTS

Professional car racers J.J.Yeley, Danic Patrick, Cody Ware are amongst the famous personalities who have Migraine.

SECTION III
CONCLUSION

WHAT LIFESTYLE CHANGES ARE SUGGESTED WITH MIGRAINE?

Not all the headaches that a person develops are spontaneous. A number of episodes of a migraine headache are trigger induced. The triggers are therefore to be avoided. As already mentioned, triggers are different for every individual. And avoidance of triggers is essential.

A few common triggers suggest that

1. A good, sufficient, comfortable sleep is essential.
2. A good, healthy, timely diet is essential.
3. Avoidance of direct sunlight is important. Use of sunglasses, photochromatic lenses, broad brimmed hats is some of the ways.
4. Avoiding stress, physical and mental, may not always be possible. But simple relaxation techniques, meditation, yoga, music may help. A good, timely rest will help.
5. Avoiding food triggers will help. These substances should be avoided ardently as far as possible.
6. A regular exercise regime is useful. However remember, exercise during a headache episode may increase the severity of headache.

These are simple measures that one can take to lead a more headache free life. Simple measures have been advised all along the book.

CAN LIFE WITH MIGRAINE BE COMFORTABLE?

The large number of people that are affected by migraine makes it a severe burden, personally to the patient, to the family and economically to the society. The symptoms can be so severe that a person is unable to get to work. The sudden onset of headache, with or without warning makes it more difficult for the family and co-workers of the afflicted person to adjust and find temporary replacement. Missing social events, vacations and other normal routine work can affect the mood, well being and the relationship of the person. Since it affects the age group (15 to 65 years) predominantly involved in the in economically productive work, the lost working hours, the frequent headaches, and the severity of headaches can generate an enormous cost to the society.

However, as previously explained good treatment options may help one get relief from symptoms and carry a good life. Identifying triggers and successfully avoiding them can reduce the frequency and sometimes the intensity of headache and thereby the associated consumption of medicines. Understanding the disorder and adapting to it helps one lead a productive life. Having a headache can be troublesome, but by no means is it restrictive.

SOME MYTHS AND FACTS OF HEADACHES AND MIGRAINE

MYTHS	FACTS
ALL HEADACHES ARE MIGRAINE.	ALL HEADACHES ARE NOT MIGRAINE. HEADACHE IS ONLY A SYMPTOM. THE CAUSE CAN BE A SIMPLE HEADACHE TO A DEVASTATING BRAIN HAEMORRHAGE
ALL MIGRAINES ARE THE SAME.	MIGRAINE HAS MORE THAN ONE SYMPTOM. THE SYMPTOM COMPLEX VARIES FROM PERSON TO PERSON. SOME MIGRAINEURS CAN DEVELOP A MIGRAINE EPISODE EVEN WITHOUT A HEADACHE.
ALL MIGRAINES NEED A CT SCAN OR AN MRI OF THE BRAIN.	COMMONLY MIGRAINE IS A CLINICAL DIAGNOSIS. THE SCAN IS MOST OFTEN NORMAL IN A MIGRAINE. A NEUROLOGIST MAY ORDER A SCAN IF THERE IS A SUSPICION THAT THE HEADACHE LOOKS LIKE A MIGRAINE BUT IS NOT ACTUALLY A MIGRAINE.
MIGRAINE HAS NO TREATMENT. IT CANNOT BE PREVENTED. IT CANNOT BE RELIEVED.	MIGRAINE HAS 2 FORMS OF TREATMENT. ONE FORM OF TREATMENT HELPS RELIEVE THE PAIN. THE OTHER FORM OF TREATMENT REDUCES THE FREQUENCY OF HEADACHE EPISODES.
NORMAL PAIN KILLERS ARE THE BEST MEDICINE OPTIONS FOR MIGRAINE.	TAKING ANY MEDICINE WITHOUT A PRESCRIPTION CAN BE BAD. THIS ESPECIALLY HOLDS TRUE FOR PAINKILLERS. THEY CAN CAUSE GASTRITIS, STOMACH ULCERS, KIDNEY DAMAGE AND OTHER PROBLEMS. IF YOU ARE TAKING TOO MANY PAINKILLERS, MEET YOUR NEUROLOGIST TO START SOME MEDICINE TO REDUCE THE FREQUENCY OF HEADACHES.
ONLY WOMEN GET MIGRAINES.	MEN AND WOMEN, BOTH DEVELOP MIGRAINE EPISODES. THEY MAY BE SOMEWHAT MORE COMMON IN FEMALES, BUT ARE NOT RESTRICTED TO THEM.
MIGRAINE HAS NO KNOWN CAUSE.	MOST MIGRAINEURS HAVE TRIGGERS OF MIGRAINE. THESE MAY BE COMMON LIKE SUNLIGHT, NOISE, STRONG SMELLS, PERFUMES, CERTAIN FOODS AND DRINKS, TO RARE AND INDIVIDUAL TRIGGERS. AVOIDANCE OF TRIGGERS HELPS REDUCE THE FREQUENCY OF HEADACHES.
MIGRAINE IS A PSYCHIATRIC DISORDER E.G. DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY.	MIGRAINE IS A NEUROLOGICAL DISORDER. THE ANXIETY, STRESS, AND DEPRESSION ARE SOME OF THE TRIGGERS THAT TRIGGER A MIGRAINE EPISODE.
MIGRAINE HEADACHES LAST FOR JUST 1-2 HOURS.	MIGRAINE EPISODES CAN LAST FOR 2-3 DAYS AT A TIME UNLESS A SUITABLE MEDICINE IS INITIATED IN TIME.
ONLY ADULTS GET HEADACHES.	THE SYMPTOMS MAY BE DIFFERENT, BUT CHILDREN AND TEENAGERS DEVELOP MIGRAINE. FREQUENTLY MIGRAINEURS DEVELOP THEIR FIRST HEADACHE AS A TEEN OR A CHILD.

GLOSSARY

INTERESTING FACTS:

LIST OF INTERESTING FACTS ARE:

1. THE BRAIN DOES NOT FEEL PAIN. IT IS LARGELY THE COVERINGS OF THE BRAIN THAT ARE PAINFUL.
2. MIGRAINE IS LARGELY DIVIDED INTO (A) EPISODIC HEADACHE: THIS IS THE EVENT OF HEADACHE. (B) CHRONIC HEADACHE: THIS IS THE OVERALL FREQUENCY OF HEADACHE.
3. WHILE BLURRING OF VISION AND PHOTOPHOBIA ARE SYMPTOMS OF MIGRAINE, REDNESS OF EYES AND TEARS FROM EYES SUGGEST A CLUSTER HEADACHE.
4. STRESS AND TENSION ARE TRIGGERS FOR MIGRAINE. BUT THEY CAN ALSO CAUSE TENSION TYPE HEADACHE.
5. EXCESSIVE USE OF PAIN KILLERS CAN LEAD TO MEDICATION OVERUSE HEADACHE.
6. TRANSCRANIAL MAGNETIC STIMULATORS ARE NEWER NON PHARMACOLOGICAL MODALITIES FOR MIGRAINE TREATMENT.
7. ACUPRESSURE, A CHINESE FORM OF HEALING, WHEN PERFORMED AT PARTICULAR POINTS IN HEAD AND WRIST ARE SAID TO REDUCE THE HEADACHE AND FEELING OF VOMITING.

8. PROFESSIONAL CAR RACERS J.J.YELEY, DANIC PATRICK, CANDY WORE
ARE AMONGST THE FAMOUS PERSONALITIES WHO HAVE A MIGRAINE.
9. GINGER CAN HELP REDUCE NAUSEA AND VOMIT. IT CAN BE TAKEN IN
THE FORM OF GINGER ALE, GINGER CANDY, GINGER TEA, ETC.

TO HAVE YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED, EMAIL IT AT :
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HEADACHE AND MIGRAINE- BASICS

HEADACHES ARE COMMON NEUROLOGICAL OCCURENCES THAT CAUSE SIGNIFICANT ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION AMONG PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES. PERSON IS SAID TO HAVE MIGRAINE WHEN HE DEVELOPS A SPECIFIC SET OF SYMPTOMS WITH HEADACHES. AS THE INDIAN POPULATION BECOMES EDUCATED AND AFFLUENT, NON COMMUNICABLE DISEASES LIKE MIGRAINE BECOME COMMON.

THIS BOOKLET AIMS AT GIVING YOU AN IMPRESSION ABOUT HEADACHES AND MIGRAINES, HOW AND WHEN TO IDENTIFY THEM, AND HELPS ONE UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEMS FACED BY SUFFERERS OF HEADACHE AND MIGRAINE.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:



DR SAUMYA H MITTAL IS A NEUROLOGIST WORKING IN NCR REGION OF THE INDIAN CAPITAL. HE IS INTERESTED AMONG ALL THE DISEASES THAT A NEUROLOGIST WORKS WITH. HEADACHES AND MIGRAINE ARE A SPECTRUM OF DISEASE CLOSE TO HIS HEART. HELPING HEADACHE AND MIGRAINE SUFFERERS IS SOMETHING HE STRONGLY BELIEVES IN.

THE IDEA OF THIS BOOKLET DEVELOPED WHEN THE FRIENDS AND FAMILIES KEPT COMING TO HIM AND IT WAS REALIZED HOW LITTLE THE PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT HEADACHE AND MIGRAINE. HE STRONGLY BELIEVES THAT KNOWING AND UNDERSTANDING THE DISEASE HELPS THE HEADACHE AND MIGRAINE SUFFERERS IMPROVE THEIR LIFE AND OVERCOME THEIR PROBLEMS. IT ALSO HELPS THEM AVOID SIMPLE MISTAKES. THE CONCEPT OF “HEADACHE AND MIGRAINE- BASICS” WAS THEREFORE CONCEIVED. DIFFERENT MIGRAINE SUFFERERS HAVE DIFFERENT NEEDS. AND THESE VOLUMES TRY TO ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS AND PROVIDE INKLING ABOUT THE SOLUTIONS TO THEIR NEEDS.

KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEADACHE AND MIGRAINE IS EXTENSIVE. HE TRIES HERE TO GIVE THE READERS THE MOST BASIC AND YET VERY IMPORTANT INFORMATION THAT ONE SHOULD HAVE ABOUT THE ILLNESS.