

Migraine Headaches

Migraine headaches affect women three times more often than men. They are usually hereditary and can be caused by stress, hormonal changes, environmental factors and allergies.

There are two types of migraines:

Common Migraine - occurs in 75-85% of people with migraines

- headache may be on one or both sides, aching or throbbing
- may be preceded by fatigue, nausea and vomiting
- usually accompanied by sensitivity to light and noise
- may last 1-2 days

Classic Migraine - affects about 20% of people with migraines

- Preceded by an aura, usually appearing as flashing lights or jagged lines, difficulty talking and confusion, numbness or tingling
- headache begins after the aura disappears
- pain is usually only on 1 side and
- always is accompanied by sensitivity to light, nausea and vomiting

Migraines are headaches that can be moderate to severe. Some people experience “aura” 10-30 minutes before they have a migraine. Aura can include visual changes such as bright flashing lights; flickering, colored zigzag lines; blind spots; or loss of vision on one side. Aura also can include a tingling sensation or numbness in the arms or legs, or dizziness. Many factors or triggers can start a migraine. For people who are sensitive to these triggers, avoiding them can help reduce migraine related disability. Common Triggers include:

Food	aged cheese, alcohol, chocolate, yogurt, onions, caffeine, smoked or pickled foods, preservatives
Medication	antibiotics, antihypertensives, hormones, histamine, vasodilators
Sensory Stimuli	flickering/bright/florescent lights, bright sunlight, odors, (perfume, chemicals, cigarette smoke)
Lifestyle changes	time zones, sleep patterns, eating habits, caffeine, withdrawal, stress
Other	hormones, weather/season/barometric pressure changes, high altitude.

Migraine headaches can be accompanied by nausea, vomiting and sensitivity to light. Migraine can be inherited. See your health care provider if you think you are suffering from migraine headaches. Treatments are available.

Gender	usually female	Location of pain	one or both side
Typical age	between 10-20 years of age	Duration of pain	3-72 hours

Warning signs	auras often present
Frequency of attacks	1-10 per month
Time of attack	day or night

Nausea and Vomiting	common in 85% of people
Blurred Vision	frequent
Behavior during attack	rest, quiet, dark room