



THE MIGRAINE AND DIET GUIDE

WHAT IS A MIGRAINE?

A migraine is a severe form of headache and may include several common signs. These include:

- A period before an attack with sight and sound being distorted
- An intense throbbing headache, sometimes on one side of the head
- Feeling sick or being sick
- Confusion and lack of concentration
- Increased sensitivity to light, sounds and smells
- Pins and needles, or a numbness of parts of the body¹.

WHAT IS THE TREATMENT?

Your doctor may prescribe drugs that help prevent or treat migraines, depending on how often they occur and how severe they are.

Pain killers such as Ibuprofen often help, combined with rest and sleep.

DID YOU KNOW DIET AND FOOD PLAY A ROLE IN MIGRAINES?

The correct diet for migraine sufferers can help to reduce the amount of headaches.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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Migraine (special diet cookbooks)
Cecilia Norman
ISBN 0722522045

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FOOD TRIGGERS

- Caffeine – Tea, coffee, cola drinks, energy drinks.
- Alcohol – Especially red wine
- Fermented foods – Pickled vegetables, sauerkraut and vinegar
- Additives – Artificial sweeteners such as saccharin and aspartame²; Monosodium gluamate (MSG); Preservatives in processed meats such as hot dogs, bacon and salami
- Bananas and citrus fruits
- Chocolate^{3,4}
- Eggs^{3,4}
- Peanuts
- Dairy – Cheese, milk, cream, yoghurt and ice cream^{3,4}.

DIET TRIGGERS

- Dehydration
- Low blood sugar and poor blood sugar control
- Allergies – for example wheat, dairy and soy³.

OTHER TRIGGERS

- Smoking
- Stress or relief of stress
- Female hormone imbalance and oral contraceptive use^{5,6}
- Lack of sleep
- Environmental changes – seasonal changes.



Migraine symptoms may be prevented by careful control of your diet, an avoidance of certain triggers and an increase in beneficial foods.

GOOD DIGESTION

Improving digestion ensures essential vitamins and minerals are absorbed in to the body.

- Chew food properly
- Do not eat on the move
- Eat slowly and enjoy your food.

ELIMINATE TRIGGERS

- Caffeine
- Additives
- Alcohol
- Fermented foods
- Bananas, citrus, eggs, chocolate, dairy and wheat if you are allergic to it.

AVOID

Dehydration – drink plenty of water: aim for 1–2 litres daily and avoid salt.

BOOST GOOD GUT BACTERIA

Gut bacteria have been shown to increase the absorption of some nutrients and to help in removing waste from the body. This has been shown to help in reducing migraines⁷.

Eat foods which feed good bacteria such as artichokes, leeks, onions and oats.

A HEALTHY BALANCED DIET

A healthy varied diet helps to control blood sugar and balance female hormones. It provides essential vitamins and minerals that help with migraine prevention.

- Avoid sugar and be aware of hidden sugar
- Opt for homemade meals to avoid additives, sugar and salt
- Eat little and often to provide slow energy release
- Eat plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables. Aim for 5–6 portions a day and have a wide variety
- Eat plenty of wholegrains such as oats, rye, brown rice, quinoa, barley, buckwheat, millet, lentils and beans.
- Avoid saturated fats from meat and dairy and replace with essential fats found in oily foods such as herring, tuna, mackerel, salmon, sardines, nuts and seeds. Aim to eat fish 2–3 times a week
- Eat plenty of vegetable protein. Including lentils, beans, chickpeas and soy.