

ARE YOU SUFFERING FROM MIGRAIN??

1. SEEK A CALM ENVIRONMENT.

2. AT THE FIRST SIGN OF A MIGRAINE, RETREAT FROM YOUR USUAL ACTIVITIES IF POSSIBLE.

- **Turn off the lights-** Migraines often increase sensitivity to light and sound. Relax in a dark, quiet room. Sleep if you can.
- **Try temperature therapy-** Apply hot or cold compresses to your head or neck. Ice packs have a numbing effect, which may dull the sensation of pain. Hot packs and heating pads can relax tense muscles; warm showers or baths may have a similar effect.
- **Massage painful areas-** Apply gentle pressure to your scalp or temples. Alleviate muscle tension with a shoulder or neck massage.
- **Drink a caffeinated beverage-** In small amounts, caffeine alone can relieve migraine pain in the early stages or enhance the pain-reducing effects of acetaminophen (Tylenol, others) and aspirin. Be careful, however. Drinking too much caffeine too often can lead to withdrawal headaches later on.

3. SLEEP WELL:

Migraines may keep you from falling asleep or wake you up at night. Likewise, migraines are often triggered by a poor night's sleep. Here's help encouraging sound sleep.

- **Establish regular sleep hours-** Wake up and go to bed at the same time every day — even on weekends. If you nap during the day, keep it short. Naps longer than 20 to 30 minutes may interfere with nighttime sleep.
- **Unwind at the end of the day-** Anything that helps you relax can promote better sleep: Listen to soothing music, soak in a warm bath or read a favorite book. But watch what you eat and drink before bedtime. Intense exercise, heavy meals, caffeine, nicotine and alcohol can interfere with sleep.

- **Minimize distractions-** Save your bedroom for sleep and intimacy. Don't watch television or take work materials to bed. Close your bedroom door. Use a fan to muffle distracting noises.
- **Don't try to sleep-** The harder you try to sleep, the more awake you'll feel. If you can't fall asleep, read or do another quiet activity until you become drowsy.
- **Check your medications-** Medications that contain caffeine or other stimulants — including some medications to treat migraines — may interfere with sleep.

4. EAT WISELY :

Your eating habits can influence your migraines. Consider the basics:

- **Be consistent-** Eat at about the same time every day.
- **Don't skip meals** - Eating breakfast is especially important.
- **Avoid foods that trigger migraines-** If you suspect that a certain food — such as aged cheese, chocolate, caffeine or alcohol — is triggering your migraines, eliminate it from your diet to see what happens.

5. EXERCISE REGULARLY :

During physical activity, your body releases certain chemicals that block pain signals to your brain. These chemicals also help alleviate anxiety and depression, which can make migraines worse. If your doctor agrees, choose any exercise you enjoy. Walking, swimming and cycling are often good choices. But it's important to start slowly. Exercising too vigorously can trigger migraines.

6. MANAGE STRESS:

Stress and migraines often go hand in hand. You can't avoid daily stress, but you can keep it under control — which can help you prevent migraines.

- **Simplify your life-** Rather than looking for ways to squeeze more activities or chores into the day, find a way to leave some things out.
- **Manage your time wisely-** Update your to-do list every day — both at work and at home. Delegate what you can, and divide large projects into manageable chunks.

- **Take a break-** If you feel overwhelmed, a few slow stretches or a quick walk may renew your energy for the task at hand.
- **Adjust your attitude-** Stay positive. If you find yourself thinking, "This can't be done," switch gears. Think instead, "This will be tough. But I can make it work."
- **Let go-** Don't worry about things you can't control.
- **Relax-** Deep breathing from your diaphragm can help you relax. Focus on inhaling and exhaling slowly and deeply for at least 10 minutes every day. It may also help to consciously relax your muscles, one group at a time. When you're done, sit quietly for a minute or two.

7. KEEP A MIGRAINE DIARY :

A diary may help you determine what triggers your migraines. Note when your migraines start, what you were doing at the time, how long they last and what, if anything, provides relief. Eventually you may be able to prevent migraines by changing patterns in your daily life.

8. STRIVE FOR BALANCE :

Living with migraines is a daily challenge. But making healthy lifestyle choices can help. Ask your friends and loved ones for support. If you're feeling anxious or depressed, consider joining a support group or seeking counseling. Believe in your ability to take control of the pain.

9. SEEK MEDICAL ADVISE.