What is migraine?

- Migraine is thought to be caused by a process in the brain that leads to the release of pain-producing substances around the nerves and blood vessels.¹
- Migraine is characterized by repeated attacks, often with symptoms, like pulsating, one-sided headache pain, sensitivity to light and sound, nausea, and vomiting.
- Chronic migraine is a subset of migraine with 15 or more headache days per month for more than 3 months and 8 or more migraine headache days per month.²

Who has migraine?

- More common in women than men.
- Mostly people between 35 to 45 years old.
- Often begins in puberty.

Phases of a migraine attack

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prodrome</th>
<th>Aura (for some)</th>
<th>Headache</th>
<th>Postdrome</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irritability, fatigue, difficulty concentrating, food cravings</td>
<td>Visual disturbances, temporary sight loss, numbness or tingling</td>
<td>Pulsating, one-sided pain</td>
<td>Inability to concentrate</td>
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<td>Lasts a few hours to several days</td>
<td>Lasts 5-60 minutes</td>
<td>Nausea, vomiting</td>
<td>Fatigue</td>
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<td>Sensitivity to light, smell, and sound</td>
<td>Lasts 4-72 hours</td>
<td>Depressed or excited mood</td>
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What should I do if I think that I, or someone I know, has migraine?

1. Schedule a headache-focused appointment with your doctor to discuss symptoms and diagnosis.
2. Review screening tools to get an idea of questions your doctor may ask to assess your headaches.
   - [https://headaches.org/resources/headache-tests/](https://headaches.org/resources/headache-tests/)
3. Keep a diary of your migraine attacks and symptoms. Be sure to capture date, time, duration, symptoms, and possible triggers (see sample below).

Share this with your doctor and ask about next steps.

Sample Headache Journal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Start time</th>
<th>End time</th>
<th>Symptoms (eg, sensitivity to light or sound, nausea, headache severity)</th>
<th>Possible triggers (eg, exercise, foods/beverages, hormones, stress, sleep, light)</th>
<th>Treatments (eg, medication, lifestyle changes)</th>
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A guide to treating **migraine** attacks

Migraine treatment should be individualized. If your treatment isn’t working well, or if there are too many side effects, ask your health care provider about other options.

**Migraine treatment options**

- **Lifestyle changes**
- **Medication**
- **Education, support, and follow-up**

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**Types of medication**

**Acute medications**
- Taken just before a migraine attack starts or when it has already begun.
- May stop or reduce headache pain but does not prevent a future migraine attack.

**Preventive medications**
- Taken to prevent future migraine attacks.

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**Goals of acute treatment**

- Treat attacks fast and consistently.
- Restore ability to function normally.
- Minimize side-effects.

**Types of acute medications**

**Non-specific**
- Nonsteroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs)
- Acetaminophen

**Migraine-specific**
- Triptans
- Ditans*
- Gepants

*Under review by the Drug Enforcement Agency to determine abuse potential.

**Controlled**
- Opioids
- Barbiturates

**Typically prescribed in the emergency room and not for routine use.**

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**How do I know if my current migraine treatment is effective?**

Keep a log of your migraine attacks and treatments:
1. Capture date, time, duration, symptoms, and possible triggers (see sample below).
2. Record any treatments you use along with a description of how you feel.
3. Document any recent changes to your lifestyle.

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**Share this with your doctor and ask about next steps.**

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