



National Headache Awareness Week



Q: What is a migraine? What causes it, and how can I treat it?

A: Generally, migraine begins as a dull ache and then develops into a constant throbbing and pulsating pain that you may feel at the temples, as well as the front or back of one or both sides of the head. The pain is usually accompanied by a combination of nausea, vomiting, and sensitivity to light and noise. Some people (about 15% of migraine sufferers) experience an aura before an attack. The cause of migraine is believed to be chemical reactions in the brain.

Treatment for migraine may include over-the-counter or prescription medications, as well as self-help techniques such as relaxation training and biofeedback.

Q: What is a tension-type headache? What causes it, and how can I treat it?

A: Tension-type headaches occur randomly and are often the result of temporary stress, anxiety, fatigue, or anger. Symptoms include soreness in your temples, a tightening band-like sensation around your head (a "vice-like" ache), a pulling feeling, pressure sensations, and contracting head and neck muscles. The headache begins in your forehead, temples, or the back of your head and neck. Treatment for tension-type headache may include over-the-counter or prescription medications, as well as self-help techniques such as relaxation training and biofeedback.

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Q: What is a cluster headache? What causes it, and how can I treat it?

A: Cluster headache gets its name because the attacks come in groups. The pain arrives with little, if any, warning and is usually on one side of the head.

A tearing or bloodshot eye and a runny nose on the side of the headache may also accompany the pain. Cluster headache, believed to be caused by chemical reactions in the brain, has been described as the most severe and intense of any headache type. Treatment for cluster headache includes prescription medication and oxygen.

Q: What is a sinus headache? What causes it, and how can I treat it?

A: When a sinus becomes inflamed, usually as the result of an allergic reaction, a tumor, or an infection, the inflammation will cause a localized pain. If your headache is truly caused by a sinus blockage, such as an infection, you will probably have a fever. An x-ray will confirm a sinus blockage. Your physician's treatment might include antibiotics for the infection, as well as antihistamines or decongestants.

Q: What is a rebound headache? What causes it, and how can I treat it?

A: A pattern of taking acute headache medications too often (more than two days per week) or in excessive amounts (more than the label or a doctor advises) can lead to a condition known as "rebound headache." With

rebound headache, your medications not only stop relieving pain, they actually begin to cause headaches. Doctors treat rebound headache by tapering the medication that is being overused, sometimes by gradually substituting a different type of treatment or medication. Stopping may be a challenge, but regularly overusing a medication increases the potential for serious side effects. Consult a physician if you regularly use headache medications more than two days per week or more than the label advises.

Consult Your Healthcare Provider If Your Headache...

- is sudden and severe
- occurs with fever, stiff neck, or uncontrollable vomiting
- causes confusion or loss of consciousness
- is persistent, when previously you've been headache free
- is accompanied by numbness, weakness, or vision loss
- begins after the age of fifty years
- begins after head injury or other trauma
- interferes with your ability to function normally at work or in social situations
- requires medication more than two days per week.



Source: www.headaches.org

Courtesy of Wellness Proposals