

BIG

Questions

Kids Have

About

MIGRAINES



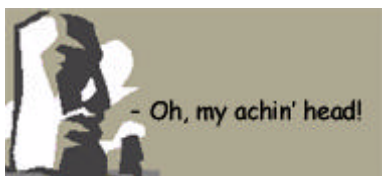
*I want
to know!*

*An information and treatment planning
booklet from the
Pediatric Headache Clinic
University of Maryland
Hospital for Children
22 South Greene Street, Rm. N5W40
Baltimore, Maryland 21201*

WHAT'S "MIGRAINE"?

WHAT A PAIN!

Migraine is a kind of severe headache, with pain that lasts for several hours or more. Often the pain takes you away from normal activities like school and play, and just makes your feel miserable.



There are two general categories of migraine: Migraine without Aura, and Migraine with Aura.

MIGRAINE WITHOUT AURA

Migraine without aura often has many of the following characteristics:

- *Headache attacks of 1-48 hours*
- *Head pain on one or both sides*
- *Pulsing, pulsating feeling*
- *Routine activity makes it worse*
- *Nausea, vomiting*
- *Pain from light and noise*

MIGRAINE WITH AURA

Migraine with aura often has many of the same characteristics, but before the headache starts, there is an aura feeling. This is some kind of visual or sensory disturbance, like not seeing part of your field of vision, hallucinations, numbness, tingling, or heaviness. This kind of Migraine is less common than Migraine without Aura.

Sometimes, Migraine symptoms will start many hours before the actual headache. You may feel it coming on and building up.

WHY "MIGRAINE"?

HEADS WERE HURTING FOR YEARS

Migraine headaches have been happening throughout the ages. This might explain how the word "migraine" came about.

In Greek and Latin, "Hemicrania" means "pain on one side of the head". In the 1400s, the term developed into the French "Migraine." The headaches and the terms have continued since then.



— Ow. HemiCrania.

MY-GRAINE, ME-GRAINE

While Americans pronounce the term as "My-graine", British, French and many other people call it "Me-graine."

WHY ME AND MIGRAINE?

LOTS OF COMPANY

About 24 million people suffer from migraines in the United States. And children and adolescents are a significant portion of that number. Some studies show that from 57-82% of kids between 7 and 15 years old have headaches, many of them recurrent migraines!

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

That doesn't make your headache feel better, no...but you are clearly not alone. And that means that more people are working on solutions every day. And more people understand what you are going through, and want to help.

WHAT'S UP IN THERE?

WHAT'S GOING ON?

It's hard to say exactly what causes migraines. Many doctors and scientists believe that what happens is something like this:

NEUROPEPTOBISMOL

Nerve cells in the brain called nociceptors release chemicals called neuropeptides. Some of these neuropeptides act in a way that winds up causing pain.



One of these neuropeptides makes nearby nerve cells even more sensitive to pain. Other neuropeptides make muscles that control blood flow in the brain relax and contract in ways they shouldn't.

This combination of higher sensitivity to pain, and the swelling and contracting of blood vessel and tissue in the brain is thought to be the physical explanation for migraines and auras.

COULDN'T YOU JUST GIVE ME A WATCH OR SOMETHING?

Many doctors and scientists believe that migraines are hereditary. If one of your parents suffers from migraine, you have a 50% chance of getting them as well. If both of your parents get migraines, your chances are 70% of getting them as well. Your folks may have given you a lot, but you and they wish there was a return policy for this one...

HOW CAN I COOL IT?

STOP THAT PAIN

There are many ways to stop migraine headache pain. Here are some of the basic ways. Your doctor will come up with a specific plan tailored just to you and your needs.

HOLD THAT TRIGGER

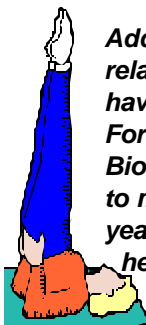
Certain things often trigger migraines. For example, some foods like cheese, chocolate, pickles, nuts, coffee and even milk cause some people to start their migraines.



Sometimes stress, hunger, smells, or flashing lights start the pain. Pay attention to things that may cause your migraine to start, and "hold that trigger."

TREAT YOURSELF WELL

Many migraines can be prevented by changing some things in your lifestyle. Getting a good night's sleep, on a regular basis has been shown to help. Exercising regularly and not skipping meals have also been proven as a method to reduce migraines. Reducing stress and pressure is another successful method.



Additionally, there are specific relaxation techniques that have a large degree of success. For example, methods such as Biofeedback have been helpful to many kids as young as 9 years old! Ask your doctor to help you find out more.

WHAT ABOUT MEDS?

HELP ME NOW

Several medications have been shown to be very effective in helping stop migraine pain. There are several basic categories of these medications.



"Simple Analgesics" (such as Tylenol, and Advil) often help mild migraines. "Combination Analgesics" add Butalbital and other elements and often stop more moderate pain. A category of medications called "Triptans" (with brands such as Imitrex, Maxalt and Zomig) have shown a lot of success stopping severe migraines. There are other medication options as well. Be sure to review these options carefully with your doctor.

ANYTHING ELSE?

DEAR DIARY

It is important to pay attention to what triggers your headaches, what they are like, and what helps relieve them, Keeping a "headache diary" is a really good method. Ask your doctor to help you start your own.



- I beat that headache!



Appointments: (410) 328-7373
Questions: (410) 328-5390 or (410) 706-7476