Migraine Headaches

Headache characterized by throbbing head pain, often greater on one side. This may be preceded by a sensory warning, also known as aura, such as flashes of lights, blind spots, or tingling in your arm or leg. A migraine is also often accompanied by symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, and sensitivity to light and sound.

Migraine affects more than 1 in 10 people, approximately 11% of the world’s adult population. It affects up to 18% of women and 6-7% of men annually. Migraine can affect people of all ages, but mostly between the ages of 25 and 55 years old.

### Classification of Headaches

**Primary**
- Migraines, Cluster and Tension headaches

**Secondary**
- Due to other causes – trauma, medical conditions

### Symptoms

**Mild to moderate**: dull, deep, steady headache

**Severe**: pulsating, painful, throbbing headache

**Duration**: 4-72 hours

### Causes of Migraine Headaches – Triggers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Precipitating Factor</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psychological</td>
<td>Anxiety, stress, depression</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental</td>
<td>Bright lights, tobacco smoke, glare, strong odors, loud noise, flickering lights, weather changes, high altitude</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dietary</td>
<td>Monosodium glutamate, sodium nitrite (present in preserved meats, fish, and food coloring), alcohol, tyramine-containing foods (aged cheeses, sour cream, liver, pods of broad beans, bananas; yogurt, avocado, yeast extract, sauerkraut, soy sauce, soybean condiments), citrus fruit, aspartame, chocolate, caffeine</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medications</td>
<td>Cocaine, oral contraceptives, fluoxetine, H2-receptor antagonists, nifedipine, mefenamic, indomethacin, hormone replacement therapy, nicotine, nitroglycerin, reserpine, theophylline</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hormonal</td>
<td>Menstruation, pregnancy, menopause</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lifestyle</td>
<td>Stress, inadequate or excessive sleep, fatigue, dieting, fasting, skipping meals, strenuous exercise, smoking</td>
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Common Types of Migraine Headaches

Menstrual migraine
- Only occur before (2 or 3 days before the first day) or during different times of the menstrual cycle.

Five phases of Migraine Attack

1. Prodrome Phase
   * Begins hours to days prior to migraine attack
   - Neurological symptoms
     - Changes in sensitivity to light, sound or smell
   - Mental or mood changes
     - Depression, anger, euphoria, anxiety, irritability
   - Autonomic
     - Diarrhea, constipation, increased urination
   - Other
     - Stiff neck, sluggish, drowsiness, restlessness

2. Aura Phase
   - Immediately precedes or accompanies an attack
   - Usually developing over 5 to 20 minutes and lasting less than an hour
   - The most common aura is flashing lights

3. Headache Phase
   - Throbbing, pain starting on one side of the head and then spreading to both sides
   - Accompanied symptoms including:
     - nausea
     - diarrhea
     - vomiting
     - neck stiffness
     - loss of appetite
     - nasal stuffness
     - memory impairment
     - blurred vision
     - difficulty concentrating

4. Termination Phase
   - Pain gradually decreases and relief occurs

5. Postdrome Phase
   - Pain subsides
   - Some sufferers may feel drained or irritable
   - Others may feel refreshed or euphoric
**Compounded Treatment**

Ketoprofen plus (capsule)
- Caffeine
- Vitamin B₂
- Sodium bicarbonate

Indomethacin 50 mg (suppository)
Piroxicam 40 mg (mini-troche)
Ketoprofen/Gabapentin gel – trigger point headache
Guaifenesin topical – muscle spasm/tension headache
Progesterone cream – cyclic headache

**References:**