



## **Migraines - How Do You Treat Them Naturally?**

A migraine is a severe recurring headache, usually affecting only one side of the head, characterized by sharp pain and often accompanied by nausea, vomiting, and visual disturbances. They are due to alternating constriction then dilation of cerebral blood vessels. A typical Migraine attack lasts for up to 72 hours and occurs approximately once per month.

Over a lifetime, only 1% of us escape headaches altogether. Over a year, it is estimated that 90% of the population get at least 1 headache. About 16-17% of the population get a migraine headache sometime in their life – that means over a billion people worldwide at some point get a migraine. Many people don't realize they are experiencing a migraine and believe they have sinusitis instead.

25% of women and 8% of men get migraines sometime in their lifetime. About half of these people get their first migraine before the age of 20, and 98% before the age of 50. 5% get migraine before they're 15 years old and about a third of those get migraine before they're even 5! Most migraines, however, occur between the ages of 25 and 50.

### **Most obvious causes:**

- Eyestrain
- Dehydration
- High blood pressure
- Poor posture esp. in front of work desk, while carrying children

### **Be aware of triggers:**

- Changes in barometric pressure
- Sudden changes in weather
- Stress
- Hypoglycemia – low blood sugar
- Fluctuations in hormones – especially before menstruation
- Infections – especially viral infections
- Food allergies
- Foods such as cheese, chocolate, alcohol cause vasoconstriction
- Other foods – bananas, citrus fruit, dairy, tea, caffeine, coke, cured meats, beer, and milk. Most of these contain the amino acid tyramine, which is linked to migraines



Often it is the accumulation of triggers that amounts to an overload and migraine begins.

### **Nutritionals**

- Migraine sufferers are often low in magnesium – look for magnesium orotate or citrate forms as these are easily absorbed and the fastest acting. Take 300mg 1-2 each day
- Omega 3 essential fatty acids reduce stickiness of your blood, reducing cerebral pressure. EPA is highly anti-inflammatory and research has shown that this essential omega 3 can reduce the incidence of migraines by up to 50%.
- The herb feverfew has been used traditionally for both prevention and treatment of migraines. 2 leaves were eaten per day. I often prescribe feverfew to be taken daily as a herbal liquid.
- See a naturopath and be tested for food intolerances
- Use peppermint and eucalyptus oil on forehead as anesthetic
- Tissue salts PPMP taken hourly
- B complex vitamin taken daily
- Many Homeopathics can work wonders e.g. Glonoine, Pulsatilla, Natrum Muriaticum

### **Diet & Lifestyle**

- Increase cold water fish such as sardines, mackerel and salmon
- Increase garlic and ginger
- Avoid stimulants such as coffee, tea, nicotine and alcohol
- Eat 5-6 small regular meals per day to stabilize your blood sugar levels
- Ensure you are not constipated as this will always exacerbate constipation