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What is a Chronic Migraine?

A migraine is not just your typical headache. They can cause intense throbbing or pulsing in areas of your head. The pain is usually on one side of your head. Nausea, vomiting, and sensitivity to light and sound are all symptoms that can occur with migraine headaches. The headache can last from 4-72 hours and are often aggravated by movement. Chronic migraine is a diagnosis made when you have at least 15 migraines a month and at least 8 responding to migraine specific treatment. Migraines are classified into two types: with and without aura. An aura is a warning symptom like flashes of light, blind spots or tingling in your arm or leg that happen before the migraine starts.

Resources used to create this brochure:

Photos from: womansday.com
and medicine-science.com

www.uptodate.com

www.mayoclinic.com

www.womenshealth.gov

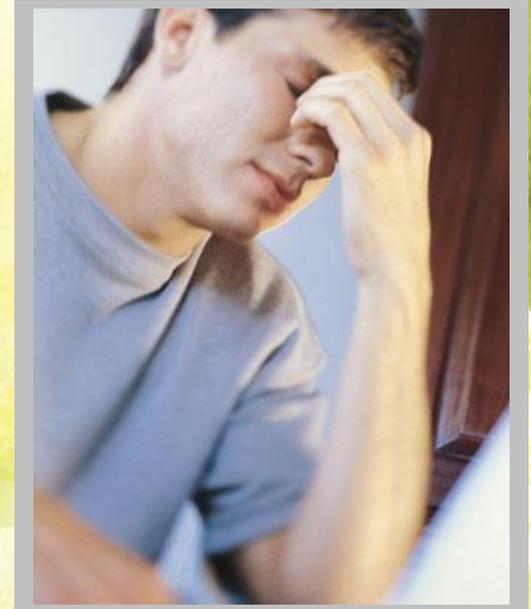
Yang, et al. "Acupuncture versus topiramate in chronic migraine prophylaxis: A randomized clinical trial". *Cephalalgia*. 21 Oct 2011

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Chronic Migraines



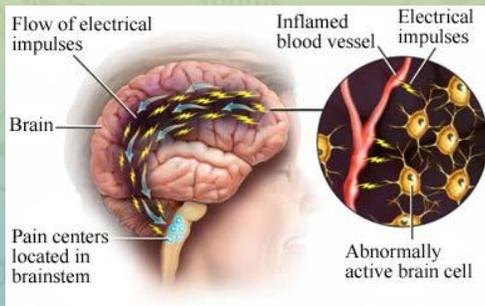
Take Your Life Back!

**There are options to get your
chronic migraines under control!**

Cause of Migraines

A lot about migraine headaches is still unknown, but we know that both genetics and environment play a role.

There is usually a trigger which causes a change in the levels of chemicals produced in your brain. Inflammation occurs and the blood vessels can either dilate or constrict. This inflammation affects the nerves in your brain and can result in nausea, vomiting, sensitivity to light, and pain.



Preventative Medications

Preventive medications try to prevent migraines before they even start! They are important because they can reduce the frequency, severity, and length of migraines. They may also help your acute medications to work better.

Possible treatments include:

- Heart medications like beta blockers
- Tricyclic antidepressants
- Anti-seizure meds like topiramate
- Cyproheptadine (an antihistamine)
- Less common but some studies have shown to work: Botox, Acupuncture, Exercise

Being aware of triggers can be very helpful! Keep a journal daily and write down information like the foods you ate, how much you slept, and what activities you performed. Then you can see if there are certain things that trigger your headaches and avoid them in the future!

Acute Treatment Medications

Acute medications usually work best when you take them at the first sign of pain.

Common treatments include:

- Pain relievers like ibuprofen
- Triptans
- Ergots
- Anti-nausea medicines
- Less commonly used medications include opiates and steroids

Be aware that medication overuse may actually worsen your migraines. Only use as directed.

Additional Resources:

www.mayoclinic.com

www.womenshealth.gov
1-800-994-9662

National Headache Foundation
www.headaches.org
1-888-643-5552