

Title:

When is a headache more than just a headache.

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Abstract: A tool for patients to evaluate and categorize headaches.

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disease, or as a means of determining treatment. In the event of a medical emergency, immediately contact a doctor or call 911.

Everyone gets a headache from time to time...

... The question is how do you tell which ones are serious.



Before we tell you more about headaches. Take a moment to write down your symptoms.

Where is it on your head?

Both sides?

What is the nature? Throbbing, Piercing, Dull etc?

How quickly did it come on?

Did anything happen before it began?

What makes it better?

What makes it worse?

Does bright light bother you?

Are you nauseous?

Do you have a stiff neck?

Does it wake you up at night?

Does your jaw hurt?

Do you have numbness or weakness in your arms?

Are the vision changes? Double vision, blurred, tunnel vision?

Does anyone in your family have these types of headaches?

Have you ever had them before?

Is this headache worse than your others?

Have you passed out from your headache?

Most Common Types of Headaches

Tension Headaches

- Pain is a band across head
- Increased by stress
- Sometimes in front, back and neck regions
- Milder headaches relieved by Aspirin or Ibuprofen

Sinus Headaches

- Accompanied by sinus congestion
- Pain is worse when you lean forward
- Pain tends to be in forehead or below eyes

Cluster Headaches

- Usually one-sided
- Often behind one eye. This eye may water more
- More often men have these
- Very painful lasting 30 minutes to 4 hours
- May have increased eye
- Blurry vision, eye lid weakness, and extra sweating may occur

Migraines

- May be one-sided or two-sided
- Throbbing headache
- Possible nausea and vomiting
- Bright light and loud noises may make it worse
- Sleep, vomiting and darkness may help headache
- May begin with bright flashing lights and blind spots
- May be triggered by stress, lack of sleep, lack of food, certain foods
- Runs in families

Less Common, But More Concerning Types of Headaches

Subarachnoid Hemorrhage

- Instant intense headache
- Extremely painful
- May have neck stiffness, nausea, pain with bright light
- Often pain is in back of head
- May pass out during headache

Miscellaneous Serious Headaches

Cavernous Sinus Thrombosis-Fever, eye pain, visual problems

Brain Tumors-Tend to be worse in morning, gradual worsening

Temporal Arthritis- Scalp pain, pain on side of head, jaw pain