

Hope for migraine headaches

Migraine pain is severe and can interfere with a person's life. Fortunately, today's migraine treatments can help many people get the relief they need.



There are two types of medicines for migraines: abortive and preventive.

ABORTIVE MEDICINES

Abortive medicines, also referred to as acute, are designed to stop, or abort, a migraine. They should be taken as early as possible when a person feels a migraine starting. Some of these medicines include:

- **Pain relievers.** Aspirin, ibuprofen, and other common pain relievers can be used to treat mild migraines. For many people, these aren't enough to get rid of a migraine. Overusing these medicines can lead to stomach problems and can even cause more headaches.
- **Prescription migraine medicines.** Your doctor may prescribe special medicines that are designed to relieve migraine pain and other symptoms, such as nausea. These may work well for people who don't find relief from over-the-counter pain relievers.

PREVENT MIGRAINES

Some of the medicines available today are used to prevent migraines before they happen. These are called preventive treatments. These types of medicines are recommended for people who:

- Get four or more migraines a month
- Have migraines that last 12 hours or longer
- Haven't found relief with abortive medicines
- Can't take abortive medicines

There are different types of preventive medicines available. Sometimes a person needs to try several different medicines before finding the one that works best for them. Keeping track of how many migraines you have and their severity can help you see how well a medicine is working.

In addition to medicines, you and your doctor may discuss migraine triggers and how to avoid them. Certain foods, stress, lack of sleep, hormonal changes, and many other things can cause migraines. Learning your own triggers and how to avoid them is an important part of preventing migraines.

WHAT MAKES A MIGRAINE

Migraines usually have the following symptoms:



Severe pain and intense pounding in the head that makes it impossible to do daily tasks



Nausea and/or vomiting



Sensitivity to light or sound

Some migraines also start with an aura. An aura may be vision changes, like seeing flashes of light or lines. Some people have trouble seeing clearly and cannot focus on objects. An aura may also cause tingling in an arm or leg. Only about 20 percent of people who get migraines will have an aura.