

Migraine Misery

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Have you ever gotten a headache so bad you felt like throwing up (or maybe you did actually throw up)?

There is a type of headache that causes sufferers to become dizzy and sensitive to light, noise, and smells; creates a throbbing pain on one side or both sides of the head; and causes an aura (say: or-uh) before the actual headache strikes. This headache is called a migraine (say: my-grayn), and it can get bad enough to prevent sufferers from going about their daily routine.

Scientists believe that migraines are caused by the narrowing and swelling of blood vessels in the head. This, in turn, is caused by changes in the levels of



hormones (chemicals produced by some glands or nerve cells) in the body. Others think migraines are hereditary, that is, if someone in your family has it, there's a good chance you will, too.

Certain things or conditions seem to trigger off migraines. These include eating certain types of food, too much or too little sleep, stress, skipping meals, having a period, changes in the weather, and traveling, among others. Unfortunately, the foods that seem to cause migraines are the ones that kids like a lot--cheese, pizza, chocolate, ice cream, fatty or fried food, lunch meats, hot dogs, cola drinks, and anything with monosodium glutamate or MSG.

Once migraine strikes, it can take anywhere from a few hours to three days for it to go away. Migraine sufferers find that it helps to lie down and rest in a cool, dark, quiet room. Putting a cold compress or cloth on one's head also helps ease the throbbing pain. There are certain medicines that can also help, but be sure to ask a doctor or an adult in your household before taking anything. These medicines include over-the-counter pain relievers and migraine-specific medicines that you can buy only with a doctor's prescription.

To lessen the chances of getting migraine, try to avoid the foods or situations that you know cause it. If you know that stress is a migraine trigger for you, avoid stressful situations. Don't eat foods that cause migraines, and try not to do things that you know will cause migraines. You may not entirely get rid of migraine, but you can minimize the chances of it happening.



Sources

American Academy of Family Physicians. *Migraine Headaches: Ways to Deal With the Pain*. <<<http://familydoctor.org/online/famdocen/home/common/brain/disorders/127.printerview.html>>>

McBride, Margaret C. *Migraines: What a Pain!*
<<www.kidshealth.org/kid/ill_injure/aches/migraines.html>>

_____. *Oooh, Your Aching Head*. <<www.kidshealth.org/kid/ill_injure/sick/headache.html>>

What's an Aura?

An aura is a kind of warning that some people get that tells them they're about to get migraine. Some people see spots, colored balls, jagged lines, or bright lights. Some get blurred vision.

Pick the Best

Let's see if you've learned something about migraines. Encircle the letter of the best answer from among the choices given below:

- Migraines are believed to be caused by:
 - Swelling and narrowing of blood vessels in the head
 - Genes
 - Both A and B
 - Neither A nor B
- Which of the following is a sign of an oncoming migraine?
 - Dizziness
 - Nausea
 - Sensitivity to light and noise
 - All of the above
- What is the term for the warning that people get that tells them they're about to get migraine?
 - Sign
 - Aura
 - Omen
 - Indication
- Which of the following can cause migraines?
 - Lack of sleep
 - Hotdogs
 - Plane trips
 - All of the above
- Once migraines have started, the pain can be eased by:
 - Listening to rock music
 - Watching MTV
 - Sitting in the sunshine
 - Resting in a cool, dark, quiet room

Answers
1. C
2. D
3. B
4. D
5. D

Word Search

The following words were mentioned in the article you just read. Find those words in the jumble of letters below. Some words read forward, backwards, up, down, or diagonally.

P	S	N	E	Q	I	W	V	Q	E	F
A	L	M	E	H	C	A	D	A	E	H
I	E	S	I	M	M	S	E	I	Y	L
N	S	S	Y	G	H	Y	C	S	I	K
S	S	E	J	I	R	O	W	C	B	X
S	E	R	Q	N	X	A	O	T	Y	J
E	V	P	D	P	Y	I	I	H	H	F
R	R	M	K	R	X	R	V	N	F	B
T	G	O	V	T	C	W	Z	T	E	M
S	N	C	J	A	R	U	A	K	V	S
G	E	N	E	T	I	C	A	A	Z	B

aura
compress
genetic
headache

migraines
pain
stress
vessels

Answer to Word Search

