

So far this week we've looked at [migraine](#) , what it is, who suffers from it and why; [migraine and food](#) and the simple dietary tricks you can use to keep migraines at bay and [migraine and nutritional supplements](#) where we looked at which supplements really can help you manage migraine attacks. Today, in our final article on migraine we're looking at the lesser known tips and tricks you can use every day to prevent migraines from occurring.

Exercise



Evidence suggests that moderate levels of exercise may help to reduce the frequency and intensity of migraine. Physical activities such as jogging, swimming, dancing, cycling or even walking briskly can reduce the severity of migraines as exercising causes your body to produce its own natural painkillers called endorphins and chemicals called enkephalins which act as an anti-depressant. Add to this the overall benefits of exercising for your general health and you have a real reason to get active!

Eat Regularly

It may not seem that important but ensuring you eat regularly is incredibly important in preventing migraines. Going too long without food or skipping a meal causes your blood sugars to drop to very low levels (Hypoglycemia) causing symptoms such as yawning, sweating, irritability, tiredness, headaches - and migraine. If you are prone to nausea or vomiting when you have a migraine, skipping meals and allowing your blood sugar levels to drop can make these symptoms worse.

Where possible, try to stick to a manageable daily routine and eat regularly, and at the same time each day. Ideally you shouldn't go any longer than 2-3 hours without food. Avoid eating

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sugary foods, cakes, biscuits, pastries etc. (even if you crave them) and go for unrefined wholegrain breads, brown or red rice, pasta, fruits and vegetables. Eating slightly more protein such as lean white or red meats, beans, pulses and nuts may also help.

Stay Hydrated



□ Ok, I have to put my hands up here and admit that this is a tip I seriously underestimated. It almost seems too simple but simply drinking enough and making sure you are well hydrated through the day can make a massive difference to headaches and migraine. You should be aiming for around 8 glasses of water a day but this doesn't have to be a chore as herbal or fruit teas, naturally flavoured waters and even watery fruits and vegetables can count towards this quota. Just ensure you avoid fizzy drinks and sugary juices which can wreak havoc with your blood sugar levels (see "Eat Regularly") and avoid drinks with artificial sweeteners like aspartame which can cause headaches. Go easy on the tea and coffee too as these are less hydrating than other drinks and too much caffeine can trigger migraine attacks in some people.

Don't Sleep-In

□ I know this won't win me many friends but after that long hard slog at work all week, allowing yourself to sleep-in on Saturday morning may actually trigger a migraine. This is because levels of stress hormones drop as you relax into the weekend which in turn leads to fluctuations in your brain's neurotransmitters, specifically serotonin and dopamine. Low levels of these neurotransmitters can then cause the blood vessels in your brain to contract and expand, causing the intense pain of a migraine attack. Going to bed too late, not sleeping well through the night and waking too many times can also trigger migraines.

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If migraines are a regular occurrence for you make sure you adopt a strict sleeping routine, try to go to bed at the same time each night, make sure your bedroom isn't too hot or too cold and that anything which could disturb your sleep is removed from your bedroom - that includes mobile phones, iPads, other electronic devices and pets. Where possible, try to get up at the same time each morning, including weekends and don't sleep for any more than 8 hours.

Any tips of your own? Why not share them with the world by adding a comment below!

For more information about migraine, help and support, visit the [Migraine Trust website](#) .

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