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Triggers of Migraines - Why You Should Know Yours

By Anne Moss

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What causes migraines is still somewhat of a mystery. Doctors believe that it has to do with the blood vessels in the head contracting and then expanding. This happens from time to time to most people, but with migraineurs this tends to be more intense and painful. The exact cycle of events taking place in our brains during a migraine attack is still not fully understood.

Why You Should Know Your Triggers

Knowing what triggers attacks is a major step towards preventing them. If you can avoid the triggers, then you can avoid the pain and suffering of the attacks, right? Well, not quite. There are many possible triggers for migraines and they differ from one migraine sufferer to another. Sometimes you're not dealing with one single trigger at a time, but with a combination of potential triggers, which makes it all the more difficult to determine what exactly it is that you need to avoid.

Of course, knowing that something may trigger your migraine doesn't always mean you can avoid it. Some possible triggers, such as certain weather conditions, or certain times of the month for us ladies, may be unavoidable.

However, preventing even some of your potential migraine episodes can be a blessing. Every migraine avoided means less suffering and an enhanced quality of life. It won't mean that your migraines are cured, but that your condition becomes more manageable.

Possible Triggers of Migraine

The list is very long and if you're serious about identifying your own migraine triggers, you need to look at ideas from more than one website, as well as do some thinking of your own... I will try and list a few common triggers to get you going.

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Food–Related Triggers

First of all, for many people, going without food can trigger a migraine. For some migraineurs skipping a meal is all it takes.

Cheese (especially the old smelly type), alcohol, nuts and alas, chocolate are the prime suspects in the food department. Also, anything that contains nitrates (such as sausage and hot dogs), Monosodium Glutamate and certain artificial sweeteners.

The Menstrual Cycle

Many female migraineurs report a correlation between their menstrual cycle and migraine episodes, often with migraines coming prior to, or during menstruation. Another fact that links migraines and female hormones is that many women no longer suffer from migraines once they reach menopause.

For some migraine sufferers, though not all, pregnancy can bring about a change in the frequency and intensity of migraines.

Environmental Triggers

You may find it hard to avoid them, but for some people, environmental changes can trigger a migraine. Changes in temperature, humidity and barometric pressure are all potential migraine triggers. A change in altitude is also a possible trigger.

Stress and Depression

Blaming your mental state for migraines is a wee bit problematic. You see, for centuries, female migraineurs have been looked upon as sensitive, or even hysterical, women with a bad headache. Today, migraine is acknowledged as a serious neurological condition and patients are no longer "blamed" for their condition. The national Migraine Awareness Group (MAGNUM), takes special care in their website to stress that migraine is a purely physiological disorder and not a psychological one.

However, many other resources include stress and depression on the list of possible triggers. Some even go to say that a migraine may be triggered by the end of a stressful situation, so that when it's time to relax - your body lets go... and gets hit with a migraine.

Keeping a Good Record

You may find it easy enough to identify what triggers a migraine for you. Maybe it's as simple as the date of the month, eating lots of chocolate, a spell of dry weather or skipping a meal. Or maybe that explains only some of your migraines, but not all of them.

If you're not sure what triggers your migraines, you may want to start keeping a record. Like a little migraine diary. Following a migraine, you will have to write down what happened during the 24 hours previous to the attack. Make sure you note your schedule for that day, what you had to eat, how much

sleep you got, environmental conditions and your general state of mind.

A final note: Please remember that a good doctor is your best ally when it comes to diagnosing, preventing and treating migraines. The information contained in this article is for educational and entertainment purposes only. In no way is the author of this article engaged in providing medical advice via this article and she will not be liable for any damages of any kind arising from the use of this article.

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The Migraine Headache: Definition, Causes And Cures.

By Barney Garcia

More than 30 million Americans suffer from migraine headaches which can be classified as severe and often disabling headaches. A typical migraine headache will give a warning sign before its onset, such as tingling in your limbs, seeing blind spots or flashing lights. You will know when you are experiencing a migraine headache because they are accompanied by most, if not all of the following symptoms. Severe pain either on one side or both sides of the head, pulsing head pain, worsening head pain with any activity, nausea or vomiting, sensitivity to light and sound, and not being able to function regularly. While seeing flashing lights or blind spots are a common warning sign of a migraine, some sufferers experience these symptoms throughout the entire duration of their headache. This is classified as a classic migraine and, along with the above conditions, the person will also experience weakness and speech problems along with zigzagging lines in their eyes. If a migraine is left untreated, the pain can last from four to 72 hours, which can cause huge disturbances in a persons normal life.

Triggers of Migraines – Why You Should Know Yours

Although doctors are not 100 percent sure what causes migraines to occur, there are something's that are known to trigger these headaches. These include, fluctuations in hormones; many women claim that their migraines worsen just before a period or during menopause and pregnancy. Certain foods can also trigger migraines, such as alcohol, cheese, chocolate, aspartame and caffeine which is found in coffee, tea, chocolate and most soft drinks. To avoid migraines as best you can, try keeping a diary of the foods you eat and record how they made you feel afterwards. After a couple of weeks doing this you should be able to see what foods that are triggers for you, therefore telling you which foods to avoid. Other triggers can include stress, changes in the environment and certain medications.

To prevent migraines try avoiding trigger foods, as well as exercise regularly, cutting down on estrogen producing drugs if you are a woman, and quitting smoking and drinking alcohol. All of these things can help you avoid migraines, but if you do happen to get one, try over the counter pain medications or talk to you doctor about prescription drugs that are right for you. Good over the counter medications include Advil, Tylenol, Aspirin and similar drugs. If you have been drinking alcohol in the past 48 hours, you should not take Tylenol as it can cause serious liver damage. Also remember that you should never give Aspirin to a child because it can cause Reyes Syndrome (a potentially fatal illness in children).

Barney Garcia writes about many different topics. He is a proud contributing author and invites you to his websites.

<http://www.migraine-headaches-suck.info>

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