

A HEADACHER'S GUIDE TO HEADACHES

Don't Panic

"It is a mistake to think you can solve any major problem with just potatoes." - Douglas Adams

Knowing a headache is coming on can cause anxiety often making the burgeoning pain worse. Be prepared and solve your headache problem with a game plan. Here is your toolkit for how to stay ahead of headaches:

1 GET TO KNOW YOUR HEADACHE

While it may seem strange to say "Hey, nice to meet you, headache!", accurately identifying the type of pain you are experiencing can help you move forward with the proper treatment.

Ask your primary care physician to refer you to the Baylor Neuroscience Center Headache Center: 214.820.9272.



2 TRACK YOUR HEADACHE

Keep a calendar next to your bed and log your headache and intensity level. Write down anything you've had to eat or drink that day. Jot down how much you slept the night before, and rate your current stress level.

Look over your calendar and see if you notice any correlations and be sure to show this to your doctor.



3 STAY HYDRATED

Dehydration is a common, yet often overlooked, migraine trigger. Make sure you are drinking enough water throughout the day, and never leave home without a bottle in your bag!

If you feel the early pains of a headache, drink 6 cups of water over your recommended daily intake.



4 ADD EXERCISE

Many people shy away from exercise when they have chronic headaches for obvious reasons...your head hurts! So while doing high intensity exercise during pain isn't your best idea, adding in 3-4 days of low level exercise can have a positive impact on the frequency of your headaches in the long-run.



5 PREPARE YOUR MEDS

Don't wait to refill your prescription. If your headache strikes when the pharmacy is closed you're going to have a rough time.

Always keep your prescription on hand for when you feel that headache coming on. And be sure to include nausea meds in the mix for if a migraine hits.



6 EDUCATE YOUR FAMILY

Sometimes it's hard for your family to identify with the pain of your headache, because well, they don't have it. Take time to educate your family on what you need during these times.

Let them know you might need the lights dimmed, more quiet in the house, or help staying hydrated.

