

HEADACHE MANAGEMENT:



You are the primary guardian of your health and headache.

Keep track of all medications: This includes the reason for use, side effects and benefits.

MEDICATION TREATMENT: Headache management is broken down into 2 parts:

Prevention ~ medication used to reduce frequency and intensity of headache. These are taken on a daily basis whether you have a headache or not.

Rescue ~ medication to take when you get a headache or other symptoms such as nausea, etc.

NON-MEDICATION TREATMENT:

Exercise is a critical part of headache prevention. Goal is to get 20-30 minutes of mild aerobic exercise such as walking, swimming, or yoga, *every day*. Exercise should be treated like a medication, and thus implemented daily. For the first few weeks exercise may make headaches worse, but it is important to continue in order to get the long term preventive benefits. If needed, start with 5 minute intervals every hour while awake. Simple and sustainable behavior changes are longer lasting. Make a plan and commit.

Flexibility and core are essential as well: Yoga DVD's are inexpensive and you can do this at home. AM Yoga with Rodney Yee. & Restorative Yoga Practice: Gentle Beginners by Deborah Donohue are a few to consider.

Mindful Relaxation: Hourly chime on your smart phone or desktop/computer to help reset posture and breathing. Remember to pull your shoulder blades together and hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 5 times.

-Headspace

-Calm

-[Http://Dawnbuse.com](http://Dawnbuse.com) is a free website that provides teaching videos on relaxation. Also, there are many apps that can be downloaded for "mindful" relaxation. An app called YOGA NIDRA will help walk you through mindfulness.

DIET: Frequent meals with protein 5-10 gm every 3 hours and carbohydrate will help with keeping blood sugar and energy/ fuel supply at appropriate levels. (Example: 5 grams of protein: 1 cheese stick, 20 almonds, 1 hard boiled egg. 1 ounce beef jerky is 10 grams. There are 14 grams of protein in 1/2 cup cottage cheese and so on.)

HYDRATION: A minimum of 72-96 ounces of water and or non-carbonated/caffeinated beverage daily.

SLEEP HYGIENE: 8 hours in bed overnight. No other activity in bed except sleep and sex. No daytime napping. Avoid large meals late in evening.

CAFFEINE is a headache trigger (as well as a short term treatment) - try to even out the quantity in the day and then slowly but progressively reduce - use decaffeinated coffee/tea or soda as substitute. Max 12 oz daily. If on larger quantity; recommended taper is 4 ounces every 4 days to reduce risk of withdrawal headache.

DIARY/TRIGGERS: In order to track effectiveness of treatment, a diary is an essential part of your plan of care. Identification of triggers is also key in reduction of frequency and intensity of headache pain. Many electronic apps are available for smart phones and tablets. Example of diary below.

THERACANE: is a helpful tool for pain and muscle tenderness. This is the GREEN tool that was demonstrated in clinic.

It can be purchased online (Amazon, etc) and locally at Relax the Back Store ~ across the street from Cottonwood mall.

It may help to use an Ice Gel pack to local spot for 5 minutes, followed by gentle pressure with theracane. Follow-up with Warm/Hot Moist towel. Cover with dry towel and stretch.

PHOTOPHOBIA/Light Sensitivity: Photophobia treatment involves a balance between desensitization and reduction in overly strong input. Use dark polarized glasses outside, but not inside. Avoid bright or fluorescent light, but do not dim environment to the point that going into a normally lit room hurts. Consider FL-41 tint lenses, which reduce the most irritating wavelengths without blocking too much light. These can be obtained at Moran Eye Center locations (801) 581-2352.

