



Headaches

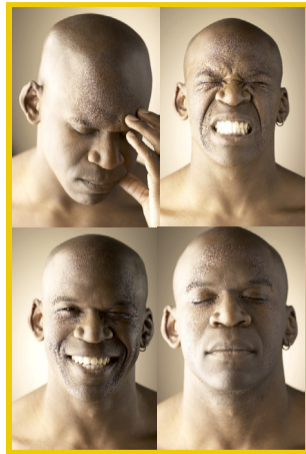
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What is a headache?

Headaches can stem from many different causes, including stress (tension headaches), trauma, jaw clenching or teeth grinding, swollen blood vessels (migraines) and withdrawal from alcohol or caffeine.

Why is it significant?

Everyone who's had a headache knows how debilitating it can be. In rare cases, a headache can also be a sign of a more serious illness.



What else should I be aware of?

Contact your doctor right away if you get a severe or sudden headache (such as after receiving a blow to your head) or if your headache is accompanied by a stiff neck, difficulty with coordination, fever, confusion, loss of consciousness or pain in your eye or ear.

What can I do?

- ✓ Stress is the single biggest cause of headaches. Learn to use stress-reduction techniques.
- ✓ Don't skip meals and drink plenty of water to keep hydrated.
- ✓ Limit your alcohol and caffeine consumption.



- ✓ If you have migraines, try to determine what may be triggering them. Take note of the foods you ate before an attack and see if avoiding them reduces or eliminates your pain (weather patterns may also affect migraines).

- ✓ If you have a headache, rest quietly and apply a hot water bottle or cold compress to the affected area. If you get recurring headaches, complementary therapies such as physiotherapy, acupuncture, chiropractic, massage therapy and biofeedback may help.

- ✓ If your pain is severe, ask your doctor about pain-management therapies.

- ✓ Contact the Migraine Association of Canada at 1-800-663-3557.
- ✓ Learn more about headaches by going to www.makinghealthhappen.com.

What can I take?

Acetaminophen, ibuprofen and acetylsalicylic acid (ASA or aspirin) are non-prescription medications commonly used to relieve headaches. Make sure to take these only as directed and never give a child or teen ASA without consulting your doctor.



Go to MakingHealthHappen.com and enter **center1019** in the search box to learn more about Headaches.

