

M I G R A I N E D U R I N G PREGNANCY



MIGRAINE IN PREGNANCY

Pregnancy is a wonderful time in a woman's life, however for a migraine sufferer it can be a daunting experience. Some women won't experience migraines at all during pregnancy, others may not change and others may significantly worsen.

There are a few issues migraine sufferers face during pregnancy which brings a new set of worries in a time that should be blissful and relaxing. Can I take my usual medications? Will my migraine hurt my baby? To name a couple..

We shaways to help patients manage migraine during pregnancy from preventative strategies and medications to migraine treatment options safe during pregnancy.

Make a Doctor's Appointment before you start trying.

Pregnancy is a stressful time at the best of times and there is so much information on the internet about doing this or doing that, it's quite frankly, overwhelming. Stress is a trigger for countless patients, it's important that prior to falling pregnant you stay informed which will reduce stress and worry. We'd suggest scheduling an appointment 3-6 months prior to starting to try to get pregnant. Asking the most important question is most useful to a beneficial migraine treatment plan.

- Are the medications I currently take safe to take during pregnancy?

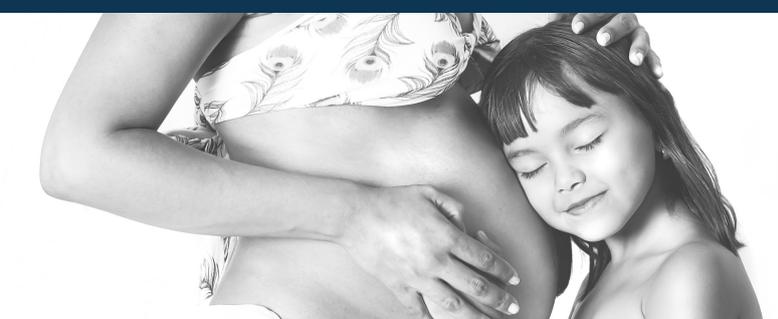
Include all medications, not just your migraine medications. This includes supplements, over the counter medications and any vitamin or mineral supplements.

- If your GP doesn't have all the answers for you, we suggest you see an Obstetrician to get any unanswered questions.

- Are there any lifestyle changes I can implement to decrease the chance of migraine during pregnancy? Try finding a migraine treatment plan that is less reliant on migraine medications.

- Is there any medication I need to stop taking before I start trying to have a baby?

If so, how long before trying should I stop taking the medication?



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What happens to migraine during pregnancy?

Every patient is different, however research shows that for around 80% of women, their migraines are less intense or less frequent by the time they hit their 13th week, the second trimester.

Unfortunately, there's an unlucky 20% who don't reap the migraine benefits of being pregnant. For these patients, migraines may be more intense or more frequent, with some patients experiencing completely new migraine symptoms.

Managing migraine during pregnancy

The primary goal when managing migraine is to have a solid plan you can implement daily to help you reduce the intensity and frequency of migraine attacks. This can be medication, lifestyle changes, preventative strategies or migraine diaries to name a few.

Migraine and Headache **Red Flags** During Pregnancy

You should be aware of **red flags** relating to migraine and headache. We have compiled a list of red flags below to be aware of. Seek medical attention if any of the listed red flags apply to you.

- New symptoms of headache not experienced before, such as visual changes or loss, unexplained weakness, numbness or tingling or changes to your speech, breathing or swallowing.
- High blood pressure during pregnancy
- New onset of sudden severe headache, which is not your usual headache
- Changes to your usual headache such as location, intensity, duration or pain quality, e.g. going from a dull ache to a stabbing pain

Lifestyle changes that should be considered

- **Relaxation therapy - meditation, yoga, mindfulness**
- **Maintaining a regular sleep pattern**
- **Regularly exercising**
 - **Implementing the above strategies prior to pregnancy is best, but if you're already pregnant don't worry you should still add these lifestyle changes to your plan.**
- **If you are not physically active prior to pregnancy, check with your doctor about starting a new plan or seek out help from an exercise physiology specialist.**
- **Balanced diet, eating regular meals and not skipping meals.**
- **Gradually reduce your overall caffeine intake**
 - **Lowering your daily reliance on coffee or tea may lead to caffeine being used as a treatment option for you.**



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Migraine Preventive Strategies during Pregnancy

When migraines become so severe and/or so frequent they are preventing you from working, seeing your family and friends, exercising or doing your daily tasks, it's time to implement migraine prevention strategies. The above lifestyle changes are great preventatives that are medication free. However, there are some preventative medications which may be beneficial to you. It's important to talk to your doctor first to get the right one prescribed according to your personal health circumstance.

Migraine prevention medications allowed during pregnancy

Verapamil
Memantine
Coenzyme Q10
Vitamin B2 – Riboflavin

Migraine prevention medications to avoid during pregnancy

Topiramate	Methergine
CGRP	Feverfew
Atogepant	Butterbur
Gabapentin	Candesartan

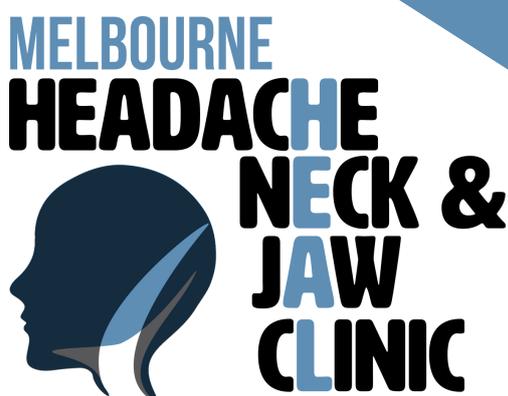
(Source: Silberstein SD, Holland S, Freitag F, Dodick DW, Argoff C, Ashman E. Evidence-based guideline update: pharmacologic treatment for episodic migraine prevention in adults: Report of the Quality Standards Subcommittee of the American Academy of Neurology and the American Headache Society [published correction appears in Neurology. 2013;80(9):871]. Neurology. 2012;78(17):1337–1345.)

*Disclaimer:

This blog is intended for informational purposes only, it is not to be used as medical advice. If you are worried, see your doctor. Blog adapted from the American Migraine Foundation to help spread useful information to clients who suffer migraine.

References

Saldanha IJ, Cao W, Bhuma MR, Konnyu KJ, Adam GP, Mehta S, Zullo AR, Chen KK, Roth JL, Balk EM. Management of primary headaches during pregnancy, postpartum, and breastfeeding: A systematic review. Headache. 2021 Jan;61(1):11-43. doi: 10.1111/head.14041. Epub 2021 Jan 12. PMID: 33433020



Melbourne Headache Neck and Jaw Clinic is committed to helping migraine patients improve their quality of life. We strive to share the most relevant information and help our clients achieve optimal health.