

Are there different types of headache? — Yes. There are different types of headache. The 2 most common types are:

- Tension headaches – Tension headaches cause pressure or tightness on both sides of the head.
- Migraine headaches – Migraine headaches often start off mild and then get worse. They often affect just 1 side of the head. They can cause nausea or vomiting, or make you sensitive to light and sound.

Is there anything I can do to feel better when I have a headache? — Yes. Some people feel better if they:

- Take non-prescription pain medicines (but check with your doctor first if you have a health condition or already take prescription medicines)
- Lie down in a cool, dark, quiet room (this works best for migraine headaches)

Should I see a doctor or nurse? — See a doctor or nurse right away if:

- Your headache comes on suddenly, quickly becomes severe, or could be described as "the worst headache of your life"
 - You have a fever or stiff neck with your headache
 - You also have a seizure, personality changes or confusion, or you pass out
 - Your headache began right after you exercised or had a minor injury
 - You have new headaches, especially if you are pregnant or older than 40
 - You have weakness, numbness, or trouble seeing (migraine headaches can sometimes cause these symptoms, but you should be seen right away the first time these symptoms happen)
- You should also see a doctor or nurse if you get headaches often or if your headaches are severe.

Is there anything I can do to keep from getting headaches? — Yes. Some people find that their headaches are triggered by certain foods or things they do. To keep from getting headaches in the future, you can keep a "headache calendar." In the calendar, write down every time you have a headache and what you ate and did before it started. That way you can find out if there is anything you should avoid eating or doing. You can also write down what medicine you took for the headache and whether or not it helped.

Some common headache triggers include:

- Stress
- Skipping meals or eating too little
- Having too little or too much caffeine
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Drinking alcohol
- Certain drinks or foods, such as red wine, aged cheese, and hot dogs

If your headaches are frequent, severe, or long-lasting, your doctor can suggest ways to try to prevent them. For example, it might help to learn relaxation techniques and ways to manage stress. In some cases, medicines can also help.

How is headache treated? — There are lots of medicines that can ease the pain of headaches. You can try taking acetaminophen (sample brand name: Tylenol), ibuprofen (sample brand names: Advil, Motrin), or naproxen (sample brand name: Aleve). There are prescription

medicines that can help, too. The right medicine for you will depend on what type of headaches you get, how often you get them, and how bad they are.

If you get headaches often, work with your doctor to find a treatment that helps. Do not try to manage frequent headaches on your own with non-prescription pain medicines. Taking non-prescription pain medicines too often can actually cause more headaches later.