



## **CARING FOR YOUR HEADACHE DISORDER INTEGRATIVE TREATMENTS FOR MIGRAINE PREVENTION**

Our mission is to improve the lives of migraine patients and their families and ultimately help find a cure.

There are many methods for preventing migraine without the use of medicines. These can be used alone or with preventive medicine for an even stronger effect. We recommend combining medicine and non-medicine treatments to create an integrative plan. An integrative plan is the most effective way to get you the tools you need to manage your pain, prevent emergency department visits, still do fun activities and achieve your goals despite Migraine Disease. To learn more about these and other available treatment choices to prevent migraine, please talk to your provider.

### **Live SMART**

**(S- Sleep, M- Meals, A- Activity, R – Relax, T- Triggers)**

Sleeping well, eating small frequent healthy meals, staying active, learning to manage stress with relaxation skills, and being aware of your triggers are the first and most important steps in migraine management.

Frequent use of Integrative Treatments for Acute Headache Pain

Pick and choose at least one of the following techniques to use daily for prevention:

- breathing exercises
- mindful movement
- stretching exercises & relaxation positions
- imagery
- art projects
- music
- positive thoughts or self-talk
- gratitude lists
- learning new things
- letting go and letting in

### **Exercise**

Even two days of aerobic exercise (biking, walking fast, running, etc.) weekly can reduce the frequency of migraine. Stationary bikes are a

popular choice, but do whatever is fun for you! Some people with migraine report that high-impact sports, jerking movements, and heavy lifting trigger migraine. We encourage you to try something different, and to not be discouraged. Exercise is a powerful tool to fight pain, improve energy, and feel good!

## **Acupuncture**

Weekly or twice weekly acupuncture for 3 to 4 months has been shown to reduce migraine symptoms. Researchers think that the tiny needles used in acupuncture trigger the body to produce many different chemicals that fight pain, calm the nervous system, and repair damaged cells.

## **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)**

CBT weekly is a proven therapy to reduce migraine symptoms. It helps teach ways to change your thoughts so that they are more positive and helpful to your mood and pain. A recent study showed that medicine plus CBT worked better than medicine alone. CBT is usually taught by psychologists and licensed therapists.

## **Biofeedback and Relaxation Exercises**

Migraine attack is less likely when your nervous system is relaxed. Biofeedback is therapy that uses sensors to measure your temperature, heart rate and muscle tension. You can see your measurements on a computer screen to help you understand and gain better control of the way your body reacts to stress and relaxation. Once you learn a relaxation technique (e.g. deep breathing) that works to relax your nervous system, you can use this technique to manage migraine. Children with migraine attacks who use biofeedback have half as much pain as people who don't use biofeedback. Biofeedback is usually taught by a therapist or other trained healthcare provider.

## **Mindfulness**

Mindfulness is the practice of staying fully present in every moment as it happens. This will undo the stress caused by past or future worries. Mindfulness teaches us to accept and observe thoughts and emotions instead of reacting to them as a way to escape. If you practice mindfulness regularly, there is no need to escape because the moments are no longer viewed as stressful. Mindfulness is an important part of other practices, like meditation and yoga. Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) is a program originally created for pain control and is now taught in many institutions all over the country.

## The Cefaly Tens Unit

This is a band that sits over your forehead. When you push a button, tiny electromagnetic impulses are sent to the space in between your eyebrows. These impulses are meant to reach the top of the trigeminal nerve to decrease the frequency of a migraine attack. Try using one button push (20 minutes) once a day. The impulses will become stronger over a 14-minute period. You can press the button again to keep the strength at the current level. If you use the Cefaly every day, you may have fewer migraine attacks within the first month. It takes 3 months to reach the maximum level of benefit. The website to order it is <http://www.cefaly.us>. You will need a prescription from your provider.

## Dietary Changes

Weight loss helps decrease migraine in patients who are overweight or obese. Some patients with migraine may find it helpful to stop eating certain foods that include gluten, dairy, processed foods or preservatives. Others may have fewer headaches when eating foods rich in magnesium, B-vitamins, and co-enzyme Q10. Overall, the Mediterranean diet may be best for pain control and general wellness. It is rich in whole grains, good fats, lean proteins, legumes, colorful fruits and vegetables. Let your provider know if you need help with these changes or other dietary goals.

## Supplements

There are some supplements (vitamins, minerals, and herbs) that have been studied to treat migraine in children and adolescents. We recommend eating foods rich in these vitamins and minerals. Avoid taking supplements unless prescribed by a physician. Like other medicines, supplements are chemical substances that may cause side effects and interact with other medications. Supplements are not regulated in the same as medications, so their quality and the concentration of active ingredients vary depending on the brand. Please ask your provider if you would like to learn more about supplements or vitamin and mineral rich foods.

## Massage

Various forms of massage are believed to interfere with the chemicals that cause inflammation and pain. Massage can also calm down the nervous system and promote relaxation. We recommend locating a medical massage therapist, a physical therapist, osteopathic physician, or other medical provider licensed to use massage therapy. Ask your provider or massage therapist about using self-massage at home (Thera Cane or foam rollers).

## **Yoga**

The practice of yoga involves physical postures, mindful breathing techniques, inward concentrations, and creating a deep sense of connection with all things. Yoga provides a variety of health benefits including headache relief. Ask a certified yoga instructor about poses for migraine prevention. Also ask about poses to avoid that may cause migraine, such as headstand and plow. Tai Chi and Qigong are also excellent, less physically demanding options, centered on energy healing and quieting the mind.

## **Osteopathic and Chiropractic Manipulation**

Many patients with migraine with or without neck pain get relief from spinal manipulation. Neurologists worry that some chiropractic treatments can damage blood vessels and lead to a dangerous condition called “arterial dissection.” If you wish to try manipulations, we recommend requesting the gentler forms. Talk to your provider about this option.

## **Goal or Intention Setting**

Take a moment to set your intention for the day or prior to a task. Some things you might think about are: “I will not let my pain tell me what I can or cannot do today” or “I will set an alarm to get up to stretch every 20 minutes while I do homework.”

## **Spend Time Outside in Nature**

Green is good! Even spending 3-5 minutes with trees, flowers, or water can lessen anxiety, anger, and pain. Make time for nature daily. Use indoor plants to receive the benefits indoors.

## **Laughter**

Laugh a lot! Laughter tones the nervous system to respond better to stress. It also floods that body with pain killing, mood lifting chemicals.

## **Groups**

Join groups. Eat meals with others. Spend time with friends, family, team members, club members or any group that makes you feel positive and supported.