



## **HEADACHES**

### **WARNING SIGNS \*\*\*\* TRIGGERING FACTORS \*\*\*\* SUSPECT FOODS**

**Some of these tips might enable you to manage headache occurrences better.**

Just prior to a headache there are early warning signs of its onset. If you can recognize early warning signs in yourself and immediately take your medication you may reduce headache intensity and shorten its duration. Some early warning signs are listed below:

- Visual disturbances: double vision, difficulty in focusing, temporary partial blindness, dazzling display of colored lights, spots or lines.
- Dizziness
- Hallucinations
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Numbness
- Tingling sensations
- Sensitivity to noise or light
- Depression
- Irritability and tension
- Alterations in mood and outlook
- Feeling of exaggerated well-being
- Uncommon energy and vigor
- Unusual hunger, desire for snacks, etc.
- Yawning
- Trembling
- Feeling of weakness
- Excitability
- Talkativeness
- Difficulties in speaking
- Pains in neck or shoulders
- Blotchy patches on skin or rashes
- Unusual pallor, especially in children
- Noticeable increase in weight
- Swelling of fingers, waist or breasts
- Increase in frequency or volume of urination

Life style changes are often associated with the cause of the headache. These triggering factors can cause headache and if recognized can be avoided might obviate the impending headache. The list below gives some headache triggering factors.

- Anxiety
- Worry
- Emotion
- Depression
- Shock
- Alcohol
- Excitement
- Over-exertion
- Physical or mental fatigue
- Bending or stooping, as in gardening
- Lifting heavy weights or straining of any sort
- Change of routine, e.g. holidays, shift work, or change of job
- Late rising, especially on weekends or on vacation
- Travel
- Change of climate
- Changes in weather
- High winds
- Prolonged focusing on TV or movie screen
- Bright sunlight, bright artificial light or glare of any kind, fluorescent light
- Very hot baths
- Noise, particularly loud and high pitched sounds
- Intense odors or penetrating smells
- Certain foods, e.g., fried foods, chocolate, citrus fruits, pastry and cheese
- Use of sleeping tablets
- Prolonged lack of food, fasting or dieting
- Irregular meals
- Menstruation and the pre-menstrual period
- Menopause
- High blood pressure
- Continued use of oral contraceptives
- Toothache and other local pains in head or neck

Foods are also implicated in the cause of headache and you may have already been suspect of a particular food associated with previous bouts with headache. Avoiding it may prove it was indeed the cause. Here is a list of foods commonly implicated by headache sufferers and the causative factor.

**FOOD**

**CAUSATIVE AGENT**

Alcohol, particularly red wines and champagne	Histamine, tyramine
Coffee, tea, colas	Caffeine
Strong or aged cheese, especially cheddar	Tyramine
Pickled herring, chicken livers	Tyramine
Canned figs, Pods of broad beans	Tyramine
Chocolate	Unknown
Fish, especially smoked fish	Unknown
Dairy products	Unknown
Eggs	Unknown
Wheat	Unknown
Nuts	Unknown
Tomatoes	Unknown
Cured Meats, such as hot dogs, bacon, ham and salami	Sodium Nitrite
Certain snack foods, and Chinese food	Mono-Sodium Glutamate