

Migraine Clinic

Certain types of food and alcoholic beverages have been determined to precipitate or "trigger" migraine headaches. Briefly, a migraine headache is the reaction of the human vascular system to certain stimuli. During the early stages of a migraine, the blood vessels of the head constrict causing the blood flow to the brain to be reduced. This is known as the vasoconstriction phase and may last for a few minutes or several hours. The second phase, or vasodilation phase, is the opening of the blood vessels and it is during this phase that the most pain is experienced. The final phase is the recovery phase. Not much is known about this phase except that adrenal hormone levels may play a part.

Known Migraine Triggers

By avoiding the following items, you should notice a vast improvement in the number of migraines you suffer.

1. Salt load (a small amount on an empty stomach, a moderate amount with meals)
2. Cheese (yellow cheese in particular)
3. Chocolate (including cola drinks)
4. Ham
5. Milk and ice cream (cooked milk is not as bad)
6. Monosodium glutamate (bad in anything)
7. Nuts (including coconut and coconut-oil, peanuts, walnuts, etc.)
8. Pineapple (especially when fresh)
9. Alcohol:
 - Beer
 - Wine (red wine is the worst, but all wines can be triggers)
 - Bourbon
 - Scotch
 - Gin
 - Liqueurs and brandy (ounce for ounce, probably the most potent triggers)

Below are expanded lists of foods to avoid and a substitution.

SNACKS			
You should <i>not</i> eat:	You <i>can</i> eat:	You should <i>not</i> eat:	You <i>can</i> eat:
Potato chips	Carrots	Popcorn	Celery sticks
Pretzels	Salt-free crackers	Crackers	Hard candy
All nuts, including peanut except butter, coconuts	"Live Savers", "Certs"	Olives	Any fresh fruit
Cheese	Bread and butter	Cheese dips	Pineapple
Corn chips	Sweet rolls (without nuts)	Any snack with visible white grains of salt on it or a salty taste	Doughnuts
Chocolate bars	Coffe cake (without nuts)	Soft drinks	Fruit pies
Diet pop	Orange juice	Milk, including skim milk, chocolate milk	Coffee, tea, water
Pickled herring	Melons		Soybean milk products
Dry cereals			

CHEESES

Stilton blue	Camembert	Cheddar	Process cheese food
Process cheese spread	Boursault	Emmenthaler	Brick, natural
Gruy'ere	Mozzarella	Blud	Roquefort
Brie	Parmesan	Roman	Provolone

SOUPS

You should <i>not</i> eat:	You <i>can</i> eat:
Chinese soups Canned soup	Home-made soup Some cream soups Canned diet soup (low salt)

MEAT

You should <i>not</i> eat:	You <i>can</i> eat:
Ham Bacon Cold meats (cold cuts) that have nitrite additives Wieners (hot dogs) Sausage Bologna Knockwurst, bratwurst, etc.	Beef Veal Lamb Chicken Turkey Duck Fresh fish

SALADS

You should <i>not</i> eat:	You <i>can</i> eat:
Roquefort dressing Thousand Island dressing Cream French dressing Secret "House" dressings	Oil and vinegar Some French dressing Italian dressing Mayonnaise

DESSERTS

You should <i>not</i> eat:	You <i>can</i> eat:
Ice cream Cream pies Any chocolate flavored dessert Brownies Any cookies with peanut butter (including coconut) Whipped cream topping White topping made with coconut oil Egg white desserts	Fresh or stewed fruit Cake without nuts or chocolate Fruit pies Gelatin Tapioca Cookies without nuts or chocolate Jelly roll Pumpkin pie White topping made from soy beans

ALCOHOLIC DRINKS

You should <i>not</i> drink:	You <i>can</i> drink:
Brandy (avoid all kinds) Bourbon Liqueurs Heavy Scotch Rum	Vodka A little very light Scotch
Wine Beer Tequila Gin	