

Guide to Healthy Sleep

How to improve
your sleep to better
manage your migraine

Why is sleep important?

Sleep is an important factor when working to better manage your migraine. It's often said that the migraine brain hates change, meaning that consistent sleep could help improve your symptoms. Your body needs sleep, and getting a consistent, adequate amount of sleep provides the foundation for healthier living and potentially fewer attacks.

In addition to this, people living with migraine are between two and eight times more likely to experience sleep disorders, compared to the general public. **Migraine comorbidities** and lifestyle factors can make a good night's sleep harder to achieve. Thankfully, there are ways to improve sleep and, in turn, reduce the frequency and severity of your attacks.

Comorbidity – two or more conditions that occur in the same person, at a rate that is greater than would be expected by chance. Neck pain, fibromyalgia, anxiety, depression and insomnia are all common comorbidities of migraine.

What is sleep hygiene?

There's a reason why healthy habits come up in many articles about migraine prevention—they matter! Sleep hygiene is the term used to describe healthy sleep habits that everyone can work at to improve their rest. By making incremental changes rather than big ones, you will be more likely to stick to your routine and to see improvement. But remember, if a new tactic, such as a weighted blanket or meditation, isn't working for you, that's okay. Take a new approach that better fits your lifestyle and needs.



5 Tips for Better Sleep



Keep a Consistent Bedtime

Strict bedtimes and wake times can create consistency in your body's internal clock. This regimen can help prevent oversleeping, which many describe as a migraine trigger.



Address Potential Sleep Issues

Because migraine may be comorbid with sleep disorders, you should talk to your doctor about potential sleep problems, such as insomnia, sleep apnea or teeth grinding.



Regulate Your Bedtime Routine

What you do before bedtime is the foundation for a full night's sleep. Your bedtime routine should include calming ways to wind down for the night such as reading, journaling or other self-care practices.



Prioritize Better Sleep

Better sleep doesn't happen by accident. Set boundaries and actively work to improve sleep. You can reduce the things that negatively affect your rest such as screen time or eating before bed while increasing positive actions like incorporating more exercise and relaxation techniques.



Track Your Zzzzs

Keep track of your symptoms, medications and sleep in a **migraine journal** and use data to help better manage your migraine. When you keep track of your bedtime, wake time, sleep quality and other details, patterns begin to appear that can help you understand how different things impact your migraine.

Migraine Journal – Also known as a headache journal, migraine diary or headache tracker, migraine journals allow you to gather information about your pain and non-pain days to find what works best for you. Journals can be written physically on paper or tracked digitally in an app or spreadsheet.

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FOUNDATION

The mission of the American Migraine Foundation is to mobilize a community for patient support and advocacy, as well as drive and support impactful research that translates into advances for patients with migraine and other disabling diseases that cause severe head pain. Visit americanmigraine.org for more resources for people living with migraine and their supporters.

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