



WELLNESS CENTER

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MIGRAINES

Migraines are primary brain disorders resulting from altered modulation of normal sensory stimuli and trigeminal nerve dysfunction. Migraines are strongly linked with sleep disorders, but can also be caused from lack of food, melatonin disturbances, exposure to light, anxiety, stress, fatigue, and hormonal irregularities (especially estrogen shifts in women). Improved sleep hygiene, moderation of caffeine intake, regular exercise, and identification of triggers is essential for treatment. Relaxation, massage therapy, and biofeedback may also help to limit discomfort.

Nutrition Tips

- Eliminate stressors. Consider psychotherapy for managing mental and emotional stress.
- Eat a well-balanced diet, with adequate meal spacing to prevent fasting or skipping of meals. Eat every 3-5 hours.
- Meet recommended daily nutrient needs. Calculate your needs here: <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/resources/MyPlatePlan>
- Engage in regular exercise. Strive for 150-300 minutes per week of moderate-intensity or 75-150 minutes per week of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity, and 2+ days per week of muscle-strengthening exercises.
- Get adequate sleep of 7-9 hours every night.
- Melatonin and Vitamin D supplements may be useful.
- Herbal supplements that may be helpful: magnesium, feverfew, Coenzyme Q10, riboflavin, butterbur, cyanocobalamin with folate and pyridoxine.
 - Foods that contain magnesium: pumpkin seeds, dry roasted almonds, boiled spinach, dry roasted cashews
- For women, use of hormonal contraceptives may be recommended to regulate estrogen levels.
- Reduce use of foods that cause migraines. Try to track food intake and migraines consistently for at least 1 week to better identify which foods are triggers. Make sure to check food labels for triggers too.
 - A food log should include time of meal/snack, food consumed, and symptoms. Consistency is key!
- Food that may be triggers for various types of migraines:
 - Alcohol (champagne, red wine, beer, sherry, vermouth)
 - Caffeine (coffee, tea, cola)
 - Cheese (cheddar, brie, bleu, other aged cheeses)
 - Chocolate
 - Fermented foods (sauerkraut)
 - Fruits (bananas, figs, raisins)
 - Gluten (for those with celiac disease)
 - Monosodium Glutamate (MSG)
 - Processed meats (hot dogs, bacon, ham, jerky, corned beef, salami)
 - Vegetables (onions, pea pods, lima beans)
 - Very cold foods like ice cream

If symptoms worsen, please return to the Wellness Center for re-evaluation. To book an appointment call Dial-A-Nurse at (773) 508-8883 or go online to <https://www.luc.edu/wellness/>.