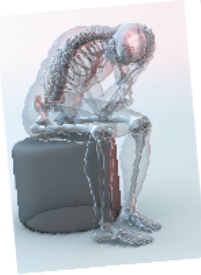


When a Migraine Attacks

It is difficult to know at what age exactly it is time to get specific health screenings, and we usually brush off certain signs that could potentially lead to health risks and more dangerously, diseases. So what screenings should we pay particular attention to, and at what age can we detect what risks may arise?

Because health is important at every age, here at THETALK, our plan is to address key issues related to health and beauty. Last issue of THETALK we focused on trouble breathing through your nose, this issue, THETALK will focus on migraines. What the symptoms are, risks and complications to expect as well as offer solutions and tips from experts at Royale Hayat Hospital.

When is a headache a migraine? How can you tell?



Migraines are painful headaches often accompanied by nausea, vomiting, and sensitivity to light. More women than men get migraines and a quarter of all women with migraines suffer four or more attacks a month; 35% experience 1-4 severe attacks a month, and 40% experience one or less than one severe attack a month. Each migraine can last from four hours to three days. Occasionally, it will last longer. Many celebrities have started to speak up about their migraine attacks and have joined or started foundations to help scientists in their research for migraine prevention and solutions. The exact causes of migraines are unknown, although they are related to changes in the brain as well as to genetic causes. People with migraines may inherit the tendency to be affected by certain migraine triggers. So what external factors trigger a migraine? Here is a deeper look:

Emotional Stress

This is one of the most common triggers of migraine headache. Repressed emotions surrounding stress, such as anxiety, worry, excitement, and fatigue can increase muscle tension and dilated blood vessels can intensify the severity of the migraine.



Sensitivity to Specific Chemicals and Preservatives in Foods

Certain foods and beverages, such as aged cheese and food additives such as nitrates (in pepperoni and hot dogs) and monosodium glutamate (MSG, commonly found in Chinese food) may be responsible for triggering up to 30% of migraines.



Caffeine

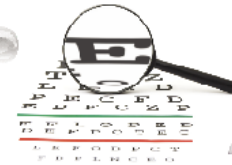
Excessive caffeine consumption or withdrawal from caffeine can cause headaches when the caffeine level abruptly drops. The blood vessels seem to become sensitized to caffeine, and when caffeine is not ingested, a headache may occur. Caffeine itself is often helpful in treating acute migraine attacks.



Changing Weather Conditions

Storm fronts, changes in barometric pressure, strong winds, or changes in altitude can all trigger a migraine. Other factors include, menstrual periods, excessive fatigue, skipping meals and changes in normal sleep pattern. If these factors are affecting you, you may be at risk for a migraine. Here are the symptoms to look for:

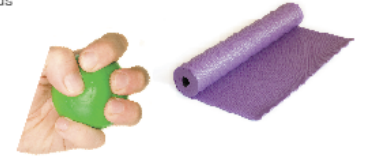
- A pounding or throbbing headache that often begins as a dull ache and develops into throbbing pain.
- Sensitivity to light, noise, and odours.
- Nausea, vomiting, upset stomach and abdominal pain.
- Loss of appetite.
- Sensations of being very warm or cold.
- Paleness.
- Fatigue.
- Dizziness.
- Blurred vision.



Can Migraines Be Prevented?

Yes, migraines can be prevented. You can reduce the frequency of your migraine attacks by identifying and then avoiding migraine triggers. Stress management and coping techniques, along with relaxation training, can help prevent or reduce the severity of the migraine attacks. Don't take own combinations of headache medicines without consultation. Try to organize your habits:

- Wake up at the same time even during weekends
- If you eat breakfast do it on daily basis
- If you drink coffee do not skip it



How Are Migraines Treated?

There is no cure for migraines. However, there are medications available to treat or even prevent some migraines. Some people may also reduce the frequency of migraines by identifying and avoiding triggers that lead to the migraine.

- Pain relief. Over-the-counter medications are often effective pain relievers for some people with migraines. The main ingredients in pain-relieving medications are ibuprofen, aspirin, acetaminophen and caffeine.
- Anti-Nausea medication. Your doctor can prescribe medication to relieve the nausea that often accompanies migraines.
- Abortive medicines (stops migraines). By stopping the headache process, these medications help prevent the symptoms of migraines, including pain, nausea, light-sensitivity, etc.
- Preventive (prophylactic) medications. Preventive medications reduce the frequency and severity of the headaches and are generally taken on a regular, daily basis.
- Botox injections. It is considered for some special cases, to reduce frequently and severity of the attacks. All of these treatments should be used under the direction of a headache specialist or doctor familiar with migraine treatments. As with any medication, it is important to carefully follow the label instructions and your doctor's advice.



Advice from Dr. Hamid Ghaderi, Consultant Chronic Pain Management:

Try to maintain a diary about your attacks. Visit a specialist to help you identify the causes such as, vision problems, ENT (sinuses or sleep apnea), neurological causes, and also, rule out causes such as cervical headache. The next step is to find out which medication is the best for you and offer you the accurate plan to prevent or reduce the attacks.

We offer a variety of options that will best tailor to your specific issues however, it is very important to remember not to treat yourself with any kind of medications, as most of the time they can be the cause of your headache! For more information ask us on Twitter at, @RoyaleHayat, Facebook, [www.facebook.com/RoyaleHayat], or watch our videos on our Youtube channel at, [www.youtube.com/royalehayathospital].