

MIGRAINE TRIGGERS

Stresses

- Emotional stress
 - ie strong emotions (anger, worry, tension), depression and anxiety
- Physical stress
 - Exertion, tiredness, poor sleep pattern including jet lag, dehydration, disruption of lifestyle, travelling
- Irregular eating
 - Skipping meals or bingeing

Advice

- Relaxation and stress management
- Anticipate and manage lifestyle changes properly
- Take moderate routine exercise (eg 3 to 5 times a week)
- Eat regular meals and drink enough water

Hormones

- Hormonal changes
 - ie puberty, menstrual cycle (especially the pre-menstrual period), oral contraceptive pill, pregnancy (migraines may cease during pregnancy and may return after), menopause and HRT

Advice

- Advice from GP may be required to avoid oestrogen-only oral contraceptive pills

Environment

- Bright lights eg supermarket, car headlamps
- Flickering or flashing lights (from television and computers), fluorescent lights
- Loud sounds
- Strong odours eg: perfume, petrol, paint, cigarette smoke, some food
- Weather changes: rapid changes in atmospheric pressure, rising temperature and humidity
- Stuffy environments
- Smoking

Advice

- Wear dark glasses to reduce glare from bright light
- Dim the background light on the computer or use a tinted screen
- Avoid exposure to strong smells
- Stop smoking

Food and Drinks

Advice

- **Chocolate**
 - All forms including flavourings and drinking chocolateAvoid

- **Dairy products**
 - Ripened, strong cheeses (cheddar, stilton, blue, brie)Cottage and cream cheeses are allowed

- **Alcohol**
 - (especially oaked/aged), red wine, port, whisky, brandyLimit alcohol to beer or unoaked white wine or, preferably, avoid altogether

- **Meat/fish**
 - Canned, aged or processed meat or fish: ham and bacon, game, fermented sausage, salami, pepperoni, Frankfurter and hot dog sausages, smoked meat, pickled herring and dried fish. Also, occasionally chicken liver and shellfishUse fresh or frozen meat and fish without preservatives or additives

- **Yeast extract**
 - Marmite, stock cubes, gravy mixes etcMake gravy from pan juices

- **Caffeine**
 - Coffee and tea, colaAvoid cola.
Take decaffeinated tea/coffee

- **Fruits**
 - Red plums, avocado, passion fruit, citrus (orange, lemon, lime, grapefruit) fruits, strawberries, ripe bananas

- **Vegetables**
 - Beans, peas, tomatoes

- **Others**
 - Foods containing MSG (monosodium glutamate), canned soups, non-white vinegars, fermented, pickled or marinated products and aspartame (artificial sweeteners)Avoid diet drinks and sweeteners as may contain aspartame