

## NATURAL FIXES

# Migraine Management

Try these holistic remedies for frequent headaches.

BY MADELEINE HAASE

**W**hile a headache can mess up your day, a migraine can ruin it. This complex neurological condition involves a variety of changes within the brain that can cause severe pain. Migraine pain is described as throbbing or pulsating, usually on one side of the head, and can be accompanied by sensitivity to light and sound, nausea, and vomiting, says **Fred Cohen, M.D.**, a headache specialist at Mount Sinai Medical System.

## MIGRAINE SOLUTIONS

Though it's unclear what causes migraines, neuro-inflammation likely plays a role, says Dr. Cohen. Treatment focuses on calming this immune response. One option is triptans, which constrict the brain's blood vessels, reducing inflammation. Another is gepants, which are designed to

target a chemical messenger involved in migraine attacks.

There are also preventive strategies that aim to reduce migraine frequency and severity, including oral medications, injections, and even Botox. Still, if you suffer from frequent migraines and need relief, here are three natural fixes Dr. Cohen suggests.

## MAGNESIUM

Cheap and without many side effects, magnesium is a common migraine treatment, says Dr. Cohen. Studies have shown that people with migraines often have reduced magnesium levels in their brains' blood flow. Try taking a daily magnesium supplement (between 400 mg and 600 mg) made up of magnesium glycinate, which tends to be gentler on the stomach.

## ACUPUNCTURE

Studies have shown that acupuncture can decrease the frequency of migraine attacks,



reduces inflammation, which can lessen migraine pain. It can also help painkillers work faster and keep pain away longer. Research shows that one to two servings of caffeine may reduce headaches throughout the day. Reactions to caffeine vary from person to person, so try to keep your caffeine consumption as consistent as possible. Drinking too much caffeine can lead to dehydration, which can trigger a migraine.

says Dr. Cohen. This technique is believed to relieve pain by stimulating nerves that are particularly small and sensitive, leading to the release of the body's own painkillers in the brain. Acupuncture may also enhance the body's healing processes and improve blood flow. Go to [acufinder.com](http://acufinder.com) to find a licensed specialist near you.

**CAFFEINE**

Coffee lovers' favorite stimulant can be a treatment in moderation but a trigger in excess, says Dr. Cohen. Caffeine

**WHEN SHOULD YOU SEE A DOCTOR?**

■ If you have frequent headaches that involve moderate to severe pain or that significantly impact your life, talk to a doctor. Enduring head pain isn't necessary, and reaching out to your doctor is a step toward relief, says Dr. Cohen.

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