

# Headache

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A headache is pain that occurs anywhere in the head or neck.

**Types of headache and symptoms** may include:

- Tension headache:
  - Pressure or tightness around both sides of head or neck
  - Mild to moderate pain that is steady and does not throb
  - Pain is not worsened by activity
  - There may be tenderness in the muscles of the head, neck or shoulders
- Migraine headache:
  - Headache that causes moderate to severe pain that is worsened by light, noise, and motion, and often accompanied by nausea and vomiting. Headache may last for a few hours and as long as three days.
- Cluster headache:
  - Begins quickly without warning
  - Headache is usually deep, excruciating, continuous and explosive in quality
  - May occur up to eight times per day but usually short in duration
  - Pain typically begins in or around the eye or temple
  - The pain is always on one side

**Treatments** may include pain relievers such as Aspirin, Acetaminophen, NSAIDS and/or prescription medications. In addition to medical treatments some simple lifestyle adjustments can help reduce the frequency of headaches. These include:

- Stop Smoking
- Reduce the amount of alcohol you drink
- Decrease the amount of caffeine you drink/eat
- Eat and sleep on a regular schedule
- Exercise several times per week

**Headache danger signs:** Seek medical attention immediately if headache:

- Comes on suddenly, becomes severe within a few seconds or minutes, or could be described as “the worst headache of your life”
- Is severe and occurs with a fever or stiff neck
- Occurs with a seizure, personality changes, confusion or passing out
- Begins quickly after strenuous exercise or minor injury
- Is new and occurs with weakness, numbness, or difficulty seeing

Source and/or additional resource:

UpToDate.com: [http://www.uptodate.com/contents/headache-causes-and-diagnosis-in-adults-beyond-the-basics?source=search\\_result&search=headache&selectedTitle=2~89](http://www.uptodate.com/contents/headache-causes-and-diagnosis-in-adults-beyond-the-basics?source=search_result&search=headache&selectedTitle=2~89)

If you are a registered Millersville University student and you have questions or you need to make an appointment, please call Millersville University Health Services at 871-5250.