



# Headache & Migraine Survival Guide

## 4 Steps To Manage Your Pain

### Why this Guide?

According to the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) and the American Council for Headache Education (ACHE), migraine headaches affect 30 million people in the US. In addition, they conclude that because of the growing trend towards self-care and the large number of readily accessible over-the-counter pain relievers, "Americans have a responsibility to examine facts about headaches and pain relievers."

The problem is that the amount of information available is overwhelming, and much of it confusing and contradictory. In addition, data shows that physicians prescribe medication as the first line of defense, and may not have the time to explore alternative drug-free therapies.

That's why Kleinpeter Physical Therapy offers The Headache & Migraine Survival Guide. The Guide is designed to be a useful tool—a "guide"—to help you find the treatment options and care providers that will work best for you.

[kleinpeterpt.com](http://kleinpeterpt.com)

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Zachary - 1219 Church Street, Zachary, LA 70791 | Ph: 225-658-7751

Baton Rouge - 7648 Picardy Avenue, Suite 300 Baton Rouge, LA 70808 | Ph: 225-768-7676

# Step 1

# What Kind of Headache Do You Have?

Before considering treatment options, it is important to figure out what kind of headache you actually have. By completing this step, you will have a better understanding of what to expect in your conversation with your doctor about your diagnosis.

*The information below is a general guide only, and should not be used as a substitute for professional diagnosis, which includes screening for other medical conditions that may be related.*

According to research reported by the Yale Medical Group, about 90% of headaches are either “tension,” “vascular (migraine),” or “cluster.” About 10% are called either traction or inflammatory; these headaches are related to symptoms of an illness.

## **Tension Headaches (muscle contraction headaches):** **Typically Mild to moderate pain.**

The World Health Organization and International Headache Society report that up to 78% of headaches are “tension headaches,” and 60% of tension headache sufferers are impaired to some extent in social or work situations. For the 60% who experience social or occupational impairment, or take pain relievers regularly to suppress the pain, professionally managed treatment is recommended.

### Tension Headache Symptoms (check all that apply):

- Tight feeling in neck muscles
- Band-like or vice-like ache that surrounds the head (as compared to a localized pain around the eyes, or one side of the head only).
- Dull but constant pain on both sides of the head (as compared to throbbing or sharp, pointed pain).
- Pain primarily in the temples, back of the head, or neck.
- Changes in sleep patterns
- Onset of headache in early morning
- Onset of headache late in the day
- Anxiety, dizziness, fatigue, or nausea

## **Vascular (Migraine) Headache: Typically moderate to intense pain.**

Approximately 30 million Americans (75% of these are women), suffer from migraines. According to the American Medical Association, “The exact cause of Migraine is uncertain...” In addition, research shows that the large majority of migraine sufferers report a family history of migraines.

### Vascular (Migraine) Headache Symptoms (check all that apply):

- Pain on one side of the head
- Pain throbs, pulsates
- Moderate to intense pain
- Nausea or vomiting
- Sensitivity to light and sound
- Increased pain with activity (example, lifting or climbing stairs).
- Warnings, or “auras” before the pain starts, including visual signs like spots of light, lines, and blind spots; or numbness or tingling in the face or extremities.

## **Cluster Headache: Typically - intense pain, repeating in cyclical patterns.**

Compared to other headache types, cluster headaches are rare, affecting an estimated 1 million people—Most (90%) are males.

### Cluster Headache Symptoms (check all that apply):

- Sharp, knife-like pain around one eye
- Attacks come in groups (clusters), that can last for months.
- Pain comes on intensely, without warning.
- Droopy eyelid during, and sometimes after the attack.
- Redness or tearing of eyes, stuffy or runny nose. on the same side of the attack
- Attacks lasting from 30-90 minutes
- Attacks come on during sleep.

## **Traction and Inflammation Headaches:**

Traction and inflammation headaches can occur as a symptom of a simple illness such as a sinus infection, or more serious conditions such as a brain tumor, stroke, and meningitis. The variety of symptoms for traction and inflammation headaches can vary, and that’s why it is important to follow the diagnostic process recommended by your doctor.





# Treating Your Headache

Frequently, muscle tension will refer pain to the head. This is why comprehensive headache treatment addresses many areas in the body. In most cases your neck will be the primary source of tension headaches. Depending on your unique symptoms, you may benefit from one or more of the following therapies:

- **Manual Therapy Techniques** - This may include manual mobilization of the neck to assist recovery, restore range of motion, reduce muscle spasms and stimulate circulation.
- **Therapeutic exercises** - promotes postural improvements, improves flexibility, and increases strength help prevent re-injury.
- **Functional training in self care and home management** - Provide a home treatment plan to prevent reoccurrences, including instructional activities of daily living.
- **Electrotherapeutic modalities** - This may include ultrasound to relieve pain, provide deep heat and blood circulation to promote healing and/or electrical stimulation to again, relieve pain, promote healing and blood circulation.

All of the treatments listed above will help to decrease the muscle tension and inflammation. Lack of normal movement in the spine as well as tightness in other areas of the body may also contribute to poor head and shoulder posture. Poor posture increases the stress to the neck. Poor posture may also contribute to compression of the neck, which is frequently associated with a headache. Thus, as you can see, using drugs to manage the pain is not the answer - you really need a complete therapy program to cure (not just treat) the causes of your headache.

## Physical Therapy & Headache Treatment Services Order | Kleinpeterpt.com

Name :

Diagnosis:

Precautions:

Physical Therapy orders:

Evaluate and Treat

Strengthening, Stretching, & Range of Motion

Balance Training

Trigger Point Manual Therapy (Dry Needling)

Postural Assessment & Correction

Aquatics Therapy

Other Instructions:

Frequency and Duration:

Per therapist discretion

or

times per week for

weeks.

Physician name/signature

Date

In making this referral, the physician certifies that this prescribed physical therapy is a medical necessity.

Headache assessment and treatment is a specialized program provided by Kleinpeter Physical Therapy, Baton Rouge & Zachary, LA.

# 4B

# Preventing Future Headaches

## The 2-Phase Recovery System

Use this page to track your progress through the two phases of recovery. PT Helps recommends a 2-phase approach to recovery as our way of helping patients understand where they are in their course of treatment. By breaking your treatment into 2 phases, you can avoid the most common patient mistake... thinking the problem is gone when the pain has gone away. So how will you know where you really stand? Use the PT Helps 2-Phase Recovery System to manage your recovery.

**PHASE 1: Eliminate & Reduce The Pain.** Obviously, your first objective is to reduce the pain with the ultimate objective of eliminating it. As you work and progress in phase 1, you will be on your road to the next phase, preventing recurrence.

- **Evaluation** - The therapist will obtain a patient history, performing relevant systems reviews, and selecting and administering specific tests and measurements to obtain data which will then be used to make clinical judgments for your treatment plan.
- **Stretch** - Patients are shown stretches to increase flexibility and decrease pain.
- **Therapeutic exercise** - patients are shown specific exercises for strength and flexibility. You are also provided with a written home program for your exercises.
- **Modalities** - Your therapist has a variety of modalities that can be applied. The most common are ultrasound and electronic stimulation. Both are used to relieve pain, increase blood circulation and promote healing.
- **Manual therapy treatments** - These may include manual mobilization of the neck to assist recovery, restore range of motion, reduce muscle spasms and stimulate circulation.

**PHASE 2: Work To Prevent Reoccurrence.** After the pain is under control, the goal of your care plan should be prevention. Prevention may include a combination of drug therapy, physical & manual therapy, diet & lifestyle changes.

- **Specialized home exercise and stretching program** - Your program will be designed specifically for your situation. You will be provided with a printed program including clear instructions and pictures.
- **We call all our headache patients** 30 days from the last treatment to see how you are doing, and adjust your program if needed.

To learn more about how you can benefit from the 2-Phase Recovery System,  
Call for a free consultation.

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