

How to Stop Current Headaches

There are several things that can help to stop a current headaches. Here are recommended self-care methods, over-the-counter medications, prescription medications, and other alternatives that you can explore on your own or with a physician.

Start Here

Self-Care Methods

We find in our practice that there is value and benefit to comfort directed measures when it comes to headache. Many people with headaches have experimented with at-home interventions. If you haven't, consider trying some of these methods and see what works well for you.

Rest

- Try resting or napping in a quiet, cool, and dark environment.

Stay Hydrated

- Drink 2-3 glasses of water if you feel a headache coming on. Generally, you should try to drink 6-8 glasses of water a day.

Recognize & Reduce Stress

- Try things that you know help you relax or reduce stress. Consider using meditation apps (Calm, Headspace, etc.) or taking a bath.

Warm or Cold Compress

- Try applying a warm or cold compress to your forehead. You may find that one works better than the other!

Over-The-Counter Medications

When self-care is not helping, we recommend that you take over-the-counter (OTC) pain medications to help stop your headache. Taking these medications more than 2-3 days per week, or more than 10 days per month, will put you at risk for medication overuse, which can cause rebound headaches.

OTC Medications

- Tylenol (Acetaminophen)
 - Immediate Release: You may take 325mg to 1000mg every 4-6 hours without exceeding is 4000mg per 24-hours.
 - Extended Release: You may take 1300mg every 8 hours. Do not exceed 3900mg in a 24-hour period.
- Excedrin (Acetaminophen, Aspirin*, Caffeine)
 - Excedrin Migraine tablets contain 250mg of acetaminophen, 250mg of aspirin, and 65mg of caffeine.
 - You may take up to 2 tablets at once, but do not take more than 2 tablets in once 24-hour period.
- Advil, Motrin (Ibuprofen*)
 - You may take up to 800mg over 8 hours.
 - Do not exceed 3200 mg (prescription strength) or 1200 mg (over-the-counter) in a 24-hour period.
- Aleve (Naproxen*)
 - You may take up to 220mg every 8 to 12 hours.
 - Do not exceed 660mg per 24 hours.
- Bayer (Aspirin*)
 - You may take 300mg to 650mg over 4 to 6 hours as needed.
 - Do not exceed 4000mg in a 24-hour period.
- Indicates non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs or NSAIDs. These are medications that can reduce pain, fever, and inflammation. If you are prone to gastric upset or heartburn, you may consider taking an OTC antacid such as Pepcid, Tums, or Gaviscon with an NSAID.

Prescription Medications

When headaches do not respond to over-the-counter pain medications, your physician may prescribe you medications to help stop headaches when they come on such as Triptans or CGRP Antagonists.

Triptans

- Triptans are a family of medications that have been available for over 40 years and revolutionized headache care.
- Triptans are considered first line medications to stop a headache.

Calcitonin G-related peptide (CGRP) Antagonists

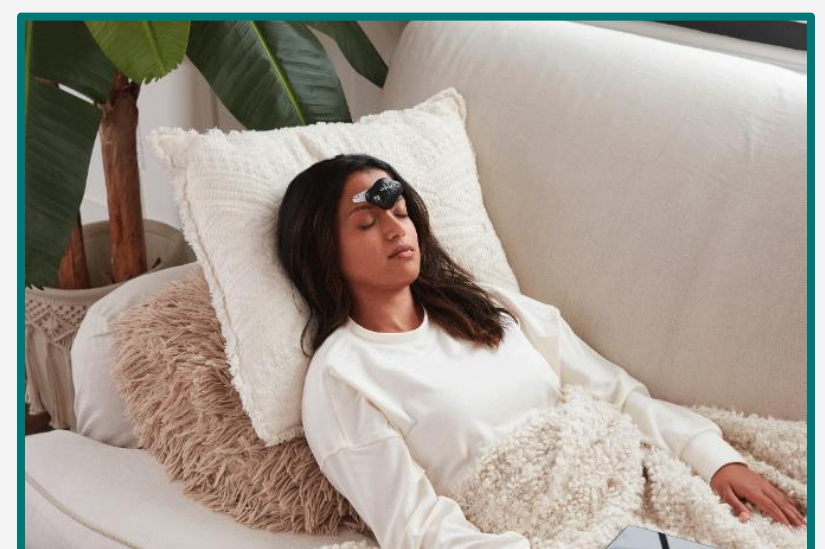
- These medications are newer and help with stopping a headache
- CGRP medications used to stop headaches work to inhibit a protein in your brain that is responsible for initiating pain signals when you have a headache.
- CGRPs can be used to stop current or prevent future headaches. When used to stop a current headache, it is taken orally, as needed.
- Many insurance companies require authorization for some CGRP medications.

Devices

If you're looking for additional aids to help stop your headaches that don't involve medication, a device might be for you. A device can be used in conjunction with headache medication.

Migraine Treatment Device

- Cefaly and HeadTerm 2 are devices FDA approved for migraine treatment
- Both devices are non-invasive, non-pharmacologic (drug-free) methods for treating headaches and do not require a prescription.
- These devices introduce precise electric impulses from the user's forehead to stimulate and desensitize nerves that reduce the migraine signals transmitted.
- The devices use an adhesive to temporarily stick to your forehead and deliver a sensation that is often described as a massage.
- Both devices will automatically shutoff after timed treatment sessions.
- These devices are to be used while you are experiencing headache to relieve your current symptoms and on a daily basis for to prevent future headaches.



Migraine Treatment Device