

DOCTOR DISCUSSION GUIDE

Managing Migraine

Migraine is a serious disease of the brain that's far more complex than a run-of-the-mill headache. The good news is there are tools to assist you along your migraine journey. Asking the right questions during your conversation will help you know what to expect and how to better navigate your condition. Familiarize yourself with these common terms before your appointment to help facilitate your discussion.

Vocabulary to Know

Your doctor might mention these common terms. Here's what they mean.

Episodic Migraine	People with episodic migraine have headaches 0 to 14 days per month. Research suggests about 2.5 percent of people with episodic migraine transform to chronic migraine (see below) per year.
Chronic Migraine	People with chronic migraine experience a migraine headache 15 or more days per month for more than three months.
Prodrome	The first phase of a migraine attack that may occur hours, even days, prior to a migraine attack. Symptoms of a prodrome are highly variable but some more common ones include fatigue, depression or irritability, and excessive yawning.
Aura	The second phase of a migraine, but only occurs in a little over one quarter of all attacks. An aura is characterized by neurological symptoms, mostly visual, sensory, speech, or, rarely, motor disturbances. These symptoms are reversible, last five minutes up to one hour, and generally occur prior to the headache phase.
Postdrome	The fourth phase of a migraine attack, occurring after the headache, and lasting hours to days. The symptoms, attributed to both the migraine attack itself, as well as the medication used to treat the migraine, are variable, but most commonly include poor concentration, fatigue, and a depressed mood.
Silent Migraine	Also called an "acephalgic migraine" and describes a migraine attack that includes a migraine aura but no headache.
Photophobia	Sensitivity to light. Photophobia is a common symptom of a migraine attack, and in fact, is one of the criteria used to diagnose migraine.
Phonophobia	Sensitivity to sound. Like photophobia, phonophobia is a common symptom of a migraine attack and is part of the criteria used to diagnose migraine.
Triptan	A medication used to treat moderate to severe migraine attacks, as well as mild migraine attacks that do not respond to over-the-counter painkiller medications, like ibuprofen. Triptans are available in different formulations, including a pill, injection, nasal spray, or oral dissolving tablet.
Calcitonin Gene-Related Peptide (CGRP)	A protein that is released during a migraine attack. Once released, CGRP dilates ("widens") blood vessels surrounding the brain and transmits pain signals to the brain. Two drugs that target either CGRP itself or its receptor ("docking site") are currently approved for migraine prevention.

