Top 10 Natural Remedies for Migraine Pain

By Chrystle Fiedler
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If you’re one of 30 million people in the United States who suffer from migraine headaches, then you know all about the intense, debilitating, pulsating, throbbing pain that they cause. Migraines can also result in light and noise sensitivity, nausea and vomiting. The pain is usually located on one side but it may shift from side to side.

I suffered from migraines for over twenty years so I know your pain! That’s why I’m writing this special report for you.

Here are 6 important facts you need to know:

1. Three-quarters of migraine sufferers are women.
2. Most migraine sufferers are between ages 20 and 45.
3. Migraines run in families, so if your parents have migraines, chances are, you may have them too.
4. Migraines may occur cyclically or from a particular food allergy.
5. Yeasted breads, gluten-rich foods, citrus fruits and processed meats can also bring on migraines.
6. Menstrual cycles and birth control pills may be a factor.

Preventing Migraines Before They Start

A migraine can last from 4 to 72 hours. Besides the ordeal of suffering through an attack, it also means that you are sidelined from activities you need and want to do. For these reasons, it’s worth it to take the time to do all you can to prevent your next migraine. Changing what you eat and drink, improving sleep patterns, becoming aware of triggers, tracking migraines and using natural remedies can all help reduce the frequency and intensity of your migraines. Follow these guidelines:

Avoid the 4 C’s: Caffeine, Chocolate, Cheese and Chinese Food because they can contain monosodium glutamate (MSG).

Eat breakfast. To get your day off to a good start, make sure your meal contains protein.

Establish a sleep routine. Get up and go to bed the same time each day.

Use fruit to stabilize blood sugar during the day. Eat a piece before bed to avoid a morning headache.

Pay attention to hormonal changes. Be careful of potential triggers around your period. If red wine is a trigger, avoid it. With the hormonal changes the threshold to turn on a migraine gets lowered. Medications that contain estrogen, like oral contraceptives and hormone replacement therapy can trigger migraines or make them even worse. Discuss any changes in the medications you use/take with your doctor.

Keep a headache diary to identify triggers and allergies that may cause migraines. Next, take steps to eliminate these triggers and allergens. Make it easy with this app: Manage My Pain Pro.
**How Natural Remedies Can Help You Prevent Migraines**

Research shows that natural remedies can help reduce the frequency and the intensity of migraines. Here are the top 10 most effective natural remedies available today. Start with one remedy and gradually add the others to see if they can help you. You’ll need to be patient, though, it takes on average of 2-3 months for these remedies to work.

1. **Butterbur**

**How it works:** Butterbur, a member of the daisy family, reduces inflammation in brain blood vessels, relieving pressure on surrounding nerves. It was used by Native Americans as a remedy for headaches and inflammation. Today, it is widely used to prevent and reduce the intensity of migraines.

**Good to know:** A study in the medical journal *Neurology* (2004) showed butterbur can reduce the frequency of migraines by almost half. It also reduces the intensity and length of migraines.

**Best brands & practices:** To prevent migraines take 50 mg butterbur root extract daily. Get a brand that is free of a toxic substance called pyrrolizidine alkaloids. One of the best brands of Butterbur rhizome extract is Petadolex, made by Weber & Weber. If you sense a migraine about to occur, take 150 mg.

2. **Magnesium**

**How it works:** Supplementing with magnesium relaxes blood vessels and reduces the likelihood that migraine-inducing electric signals in the brain will be generated.

**Good info to know:** You can take magnesium by itself to prevent migraines or take a combination formula.

**Best brands & practices:** MigraLief prevents migraines with a combination of magnesium, vitamin B2 and feverfew. Take it once a day for at least a month before you expect to see results. Migravent contains a fourth ingredient, butterbur, which was mentioned above. A headache remedy called Migralex contains 500 mg of aspirin and 75 mg of magnesium. Magnesium does three things. One, it helps the headache itself. Two, it helps the absorption of aspirin. Three, it protects your stomach against irritation from aspirin. For prevention, take one pill a day. Magnesium only: Take 200 mg each evening.

3. **B2 (Riboflavin)**

**How it works:** Research shows that B2 may be as effective as betablockers, a therapy traditionally used to prevent migraines, because it relaxes blood vessels.

**Good info to know:** Taking high doses of vitamin B2 (riboflavin) can help reduce the incidence of migraines, according to research in the journal *Neurology*. Other studies show that B2 can decrease migraine frequency by 67% after just 6 weeks.
**Best brands & practices:** You’ll need to take daily doses of 400 mg of **B2** each morning for at least a month to expect to see a reduction in migraine frequency.

### 4. Coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10)

**How it works:** Research shows that migraine headaches may result from disruption of energy production in the body. CoQ10 is a nutrient that plays an important role in the energy that each cell needs to function.

**Good info to know:** Research published in the medical journal *Cephalalgia arch* showed that when 32 patients (26 women, 6 men) with a history of migraines were treated with coenzyme Q10, sixty-one percent of patients had a greater than 50 percent reduction in the number of days with migraine headache. Best of all, there were no side effects.

**Best brands & practices:** Take a CoQ10 supplement with 200 mg Trans-form CoQ10.

### 5. Feverfew

**How it works:** Feverfew, like butterbur is also a member of the daisy family, helps to stop blood platelets from releasing too much serotonin and histamine, both of which can dilate blood vessels and lead to migraines.

**Good info to know:** A systematic review of research in the medical journal *Public Health Nutrition* (2000) showed that feverfew is effective and safe in the prevention of migraines. Research shows that homeopathic feverfew can help in cutting down the frequency of migraines. Ask your holistic doctor if this is right for you.

**Best brands & practices:** The dried leaves, flowers and stems of feverfew are used to make supplements found in capsules, tablets and extracts. It’s important to buy high-quality supplements especially when it comes to nutrients like feverfew, to ensure botanical integrity. A good high potency brand is **MygraFew** by Nature’s Way. Feverfew works best as a preventative taken on a daily basis rather than when a headache is already in progress. Pregnant women should not use feverfew.

### 6. Yoga

**How it works:** Yoga helps prevent migraines by bringing the body into balance with breath and postures.

**Good info to know:** A study in *Headache* (2007) showed the effectiveness of yoga therapy in managing migraines. Seventy-two patients with migraines without aura were randomly assigned to yoga therapy or a self-care group for three months. At the end of the study, headache frequency, severity, pain and associated depression and anxiety were all significantly lower in the yoga group compared to the self-care group.

**Best brands & practices:** Choose a type of yoga that you feel comfortable with. Good practices for beginners include Kripalu Yoga, Viniyoga or Gentle Yoga. Find a teacher who will gently guide
you through the poses. You’ll also find CDs so you can do slow yoga at home. *Yoga Journal* online features videos to show you how to do different poses correctly and how to build a sequence. You can also download, (for a fee), instructional yoga videos to help you reduce stress, sleep better and even, desk yoga so you can stay relaxed and balanced at work! Visit [www.yogajournal.com](http://www.yogajournal.com).

Yoga nidra or yogic sleep can also help reduce stress that can trigger migraines. Doing one session is the equivalent to three hours sleep! Jennifer Reis is my favorite teacher of yoga nidra. Her CD’s are very healing. Visit [www.jenniferreisyoga.com](http://www.jenniferreisyoga.com) to learn more.

7. Water

**How it works:** Drinking water can help head off a migraine. That’s because the physiology of the body changes when you add pure water, and that change may in some way trigger a switch that turns off the headache.

**Good to know:** Patients report that if they drink water, they can often forestall a headache coming on according to Joel Saper, M.D., founder and director of the Michigan Head Pain & Neurological Institute.

**Best brands & practices:** Drink a couple of glasses of filtered water if you feel a migraine coming on.

8. Progressive Relaxation

**Why it works:** Progressive relaxation gets rid of stress, a prime trigger for migraine pain.

**Good info to know:** Progressive relaxation is one way to evoke the Relaxation Response pioneered by Herbert Benson, MD at the Benson- Henry Institute for Mind-Body Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts. That’s because it enhances the body’s own morphine-like substances, what is referred to as the runner’s high. You can elicit the relaxation response in many different ways, including progressive muscle relaxation, diaphragmatic breathing, repetitive prayer, visualization and guided imagery.

**Best brands & practices:** In progressive muscle relaxation, says Dr. Benson, you think of each body part, flex and then relax it. “Start with your face and move downward through your whole body, from your shoulders to your toes. Do it once or twice a day for 10-20 minutes on a regular basis for best results.” For more information visit the Benson Institute Mind-Body website at [www.bensonhenryinstitute.org](http://www.bensonhenryinstitute.org).

9. Belly Breathing

**Why it works:** Our belly is one of the major areas that get tight and tense when we are under a lot of stress,” Dennis Lewis, author of *Free Your Breath, Free Your Life*. “And this greatly affects our internal organs, our breath, our energy, and our overall health.” Good info to know: This exercise will help you relax. When we open our belly and allow our diaphragm to move deeper down into our abdomen on inhalation, and farther up to squeeze our lungs and support our heart on exhalation, it has a powerful influence on the way we breathe and on our lives.
Best brands & practices: Dennis Lewis teaches the transformative power of breathing properly. His books and CDs can help you to incorporate this important practice into your life.

10. Acupuncture & Acupressure

Why it works: One theory is that these practices release endorphins, the feel-good chemical in the body. From the Traditional Chinese Medicine point of view, it is thought to relieve the stagnation of chi, or energy, in the body.

Good info to know: Research in the medical journal Complementary Therapies in Medicine (2007) indicates that acupuncture provides 50 to 80 percent relief to people with acute or chronic pain, so it may help migraine sufferers, too. “I’ve had patients do acupressure during the aura and not get their headache,” says Robert A. Duarte, M.D., co-director of the Long Island Jewish (LIJ) Pain and Headache Treatment Center in Manhasset, New York, and a certified acupuncturist. “It’s not 100 percent, but it’s an option.”

Best brands & practices: To perform acupressure, press down on the acupuncture point between the thumb and index finger, called Large Intestine 4. Repeat, as needed. See a qualified acupuncturist for treatment. To find a practitioner visit the American Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine at http://www.aaaomonline.org

Please Note: This information is not a substitute for medical advice. If your headaches have gotten worse over days and weeks, if you’ve never had headaches before, (especially if you are over 50), or the headaches come on suddenly and don’t go away, call your doctor. Other warning signs include weakness, numbness, or a change in your hearing, sight, memory, personality, or cognitive abilities. Also contact your doctor if your headache is accompanied by a stiff neck, a rash, nausea, vomiting, a fever, breathing problems, or a head injury.
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• Living in harmony with the natural world is the best way to maintain superior health
• A proactive approach to preventing illness is always better than treating it after the fact
• Reducing exposure to environmental toxins is an imperative of modern life
• Eating nutritious, sustainable food is fundamental to sustained health
• The more information people have concerning their health, the better decisions they make
• Pharmaceutical drugs and high-risk medical interventions should always be a last resort
• Natural healing options should be legal, accessible and affordable for all people
• The present moment is the gateway to health, happiness and enlightenment

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