



TRACK AND TAME YOUR MIGRAINES

**5 TOOLS TO HELP YOU PREVENT ATTACKS
EVERY DAY**

www.MigraineSavvy.com



WELCOME TO MIGRAINE SAVVY

I'm so happy you're here!

Living with migraines can be really, really hard. (A bit of an understatement?!) But I've created TRACK AND TAME YOUR MIGRAINES to give you my top five super easy ways to get started on your journey towards managing this chronic condition.

Here you'll find...

1. A monthly diary

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Keeping track of your migraines is essential for detecting patterns and identifying your triggers. It also provides your healthcare team with crucial information that can be used to refine your treatment plan.

2. Medication notes

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When you have to take several different medications, making a note of what you take and when is really important. This helps you to avoid overdosing or missing a dose. It also provides a place to jot down potential triggers for that day.

3. Medication tracker and treatment ideas record

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There can be lots of trial and error involved in finding the medication(s) that work for you. Keeping written lists of everything you take will help you to keep track of what you've tried, what works and what doesn't. This information is invaluable when you're trying to find acute and prophylactic (preventative) medications.

Migraineurs have more tension build up in the neck, shoulders and jaw than most people. There are lots of easy exercises you can do to significantly reduce tension in these areas. If you can't have regular massages, these exercises are essential (and free!)

Meditation has been proven to reduce stress - and stress is a common migraine trigger. According to Dr. Herbert Benson, if we just imagine being migraine free then the brain can be fooled into being free of pain. However - the trick is to focus on being pain free, not focusing on pain or migraines. (You're not even supposed to use those two words!)

I use all five of these tools almost every day to help me manage my migraines.

I hope you'll find them beneficial, and enjoyable too!

Holly



MIGRAINE SAVVY MEDICATION TRACKING



Use this form to keep track of your medications, and take it along to your medical appointments

Name and dose (mgs) of medication	Start date	End date	Number of tablets				Results
			Morning	Noon	Evening	Bedtime	

EXERCISES FOR YOUR NECK AND BACK



These super easy exercises are designed to reduce tension in your neck and back.

Important: if you feel pain at any point, please STOP the exercise immediately. Pain can be a sign of injury and needs to be discussed with your doctor.

All you'll need for these exercises is to lie down on the floor with a rolled-up towel and two tennis balls in a sock. Yup, that's how easy they are!

Try to spend at least 10 minutes in each position to allow your muscles to relax properly. It can take up to 20 minutes for your muscles to relax normally - let alone after an intense migraine.

Ready? Let's go!

Exercise 1: Tennis balls

1. Put two tennis balls in a clean sock. Tie a knot in the sock so the balls can't fall out, roll around or move too far apart. You need them as close together as possible.
2. Lie down on a carpeted floor, or a yoga mat or folded blanket.
3. Place the two balls in the sock under your upper back and let your spine rest in the gap between the balls. Just above the shoulder blades is a nice spot.
4. Become aware of your breath. When you exhale, imagine your body relaxing over the balls. Feel your back sink down and relax towards the floor. Keep breathing and being aware of your breath. Once this area feels relaxed...

5. Move the tennis balls in the sock a little lower down your back. Notice your breathing again and allow your back to relax.
6. Repeat this process down through your rib cage area until each part of your back feels relaxed.
7. Then go back up to your neck. Place the balls under your neck with your spine resting between the balls. Rest and breathe. If it feels comfortable and right, you can roll up and down on the tennis balls - either by raising your knees, or rocking, or pressing your heels into the ground and pointing and flexing your toes. Let the movement from your ankles move your whole body.

Exercise 2: The towel - rolled

Another one of my regular exercises is to lie down on the floor with a rolled-up towel horizontally under my neck to start with. Then I turn it vertically and place it beneath my spine.

Starting with the towel under your neck, follow the same steps above, noticing your breath and allowing your spine to relax.

Next, turn the towel around so it can lie beneath your spine. Gradually move the towel all the way down to your tailbone, and finish by placing it horizontally in the curve of your lower back.

You're aiming to place the towel anywhere under your neck and spine that feels good, and in a position that you can relax into.

Exercise 3: The towel - folded

Using a folded towel can help to improve or change your normal sitting position, and even your long-term posture.

Fold the towel so it's just wider than your hips. Sit on it and lean forward, just enough so that you feel your sitting bones make your pelvis tilt forward slightly.

This slight movement reduces strain on your upper back and neck muscles, making it one of the easiest neck/back pain relief exercises you can do.

You can also use a foam wedge or a small Pilates disk - either of these will change the position of your pelvis and reduce tension higher up your body.

This is a particularly good trick for those days you have to spend too long sitting down in front of the computer!

And relax...

These exercises are designed to help you regularly relieve tension in your neck and back. In turn, this can help keep your body more relaxed, which can help to prevent - or reduce the severity of - migraine attacks.

If you suffer from ongoing, severe neck and back pain, please discuss this with your healthcare professional.





BASIC MEDITATION EXERCISES FOR REDUCING MIGRAINES

The steps below were inspired by Dr. Herbert Benson's relaxation response. I've adapted them specifically to help with migraines.

Step 1

Find a comfortable position to sit in, in a quiet place where you won't be disturbed.

Step 2

Close your eyes and breathe in. Allow your diaphragm and lungs to expand. Inhale and exhale consciously. Take three deep breaths.

Step 3

Consciously begin to relax your muscles.

Start with your feet, and wiggle your toes. Slowly, move your awareness to your ankles, calves, knees, thighs and buttocks. Feel the weight of your bottom on the chair. Pause here for a moment and feel the support. Slowly move your attention to your abdomen, your spine and your whole torso.

Roll your shoulders, neck, arms and hands. Move your awareness to your head and face. Allow everything to relax. Consciously relax. Allow your jaw and all of the muscles around your ears to relax.

Just breathe, and relax.

If you're lying down in bed (pre-migraine), then just focus your attention on feeling your weight on the bed. Sink into the bed. As above, move your attention slowly through your whole body and consciously relax each part.

Try a mantra like this if it helps you:

"My blood vessels are balanced and flowing freely. My hands and feet are warm and relaxed. My nervous system is calm... calm and balanced..."

Step 4

Bring your awareness to your breath.

Breathe only through your nose. Recall or imagine a time when you were well. Allow yourself to be fully free, and really *feel* the memory of total and complete wellness.

See yourself as happy and full of energy. You're free to do what you wish at any time. You have no cares in the world. As you breathe in, enjoy the memory of your pain free, healthy, happy state of being. As you breathe out, let your mind say, "relax". *Reeeelaaaaxxxx*. Just relax.

Allow everything to relax now.

Step 5

Continue this memory recall for 20 minutes, or more if time allows. You can set a quiet, gentle alarm to let you know when your 20 minutes are up.

Eventually, if you practice this enough, your own internal body clock will know when the 20 minutes are up.

If you're lying down, you can let yourself fall asleep. The best thing to do before a migraine is to induce sleep if at all possible.

Step 6

After the 20 minutes, or whenever you naturally wake up, slowly bring your awareness back into the room, to your breath and your body. Remain seated or lying down for at least two minutes while you open and close your eyes to end your meditation.

Allow your normal thoughts back in.

But! Rushing back to daily life immediately isn't recommended. Make sure you're back in your body before you stand up.

If this has eliminated or prevented your migraine, rejoice!

If it hasn't, you can try the meditation again.

You can meditate as often as you like (time permitting) when you're dealing with any of the phases of your migraine attack.

Step 7

There is no right or wrong way to do this. It's inevitable that your regular thoughts will arise and intrude.

If they do interrupt while you're recalling your healthy, happy memory, just become aware of them. But then, gently turn your attention back to your breath and your memory.

When you first start meditating, try to be gentle with yourself - and your busy mind - and persevere. In the words of Dr. Benson, "maintaining a passive attitude" is vital to the success of regular, successful meditation practice.

You can also use guided meditation to help you - either record yourself speaking the steps above, or find some downloads that appeal to you. I've done a meditation course; the link is below. Personally, I find guided imagery essential to enduring the long migraine attacks that I suffer.

Further resources

If you like the idea of meditation and want to learn more, you can find other [guided mindfulness meditation](#) ideas and [beginner's tips](#) on my website.

I have three courses you might like...

#1. [Meditations and Energetic Healing for Migraine Sufferers: Heal from the Inside Out](#)

#2. [How to Manage Anxiety and Depression from Your Migraines](#)

#3. [The Migraine Pain Management Course](#)

If you'd like a complete, step-by-step guide to learning how to cope with and manage your migraines, check out my [Migraine Pain Management Course](#). It's packed with tons of essential information and practical tools and resources to kick-start your journey towards a happier, healthier life that you can love again.

I'm so glad you joined the mailing list and the Migraine Savvy community. You are so welcome here! And I look forward to connecting with you again soon.

Until then, stay well and be pain free.

Holly

