



General Authority for Health Services for the Emirate of Abu Dhabi

Al-Rahba Hospital, Department of Pharmacy

Headache



What is Headache?

One of the most common forms of pain. You get a headache when blood vessels in the head widen or narrow for a little while sometimes it is felt in only one part of the head, and sometimes it can move from one part of the head to another. Women are more likely to get headaches because of changes in their hormonal cycle.

There are two kinds of headache:-

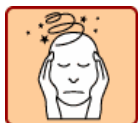
Tension type headache: affecting about 75 % of all headache sufferers

- It's a steady ache, throbbing & affect both sides of the head.
- Pain is moderate in severity and constant.

Cluster type: relatively rare.

- Headache during which the pain steadily gets worse during the first 15 minutes and lasts for up to 3 hours.
- It happens during sleep, behind or around one or both eyes.
- Severe in the front, or one side of the head.
- It occurs at almost same time every day over several days.

Headache differs from migraine as it doesn't include nausea/ vomiting or blurred vision like migraine does.



Causes of Headache: Can be emotional stress, lack of sleep, work that makes you tired, anxiety or depression, eye strain, low blood sugar or allergic reactions.

How is headache treated?

Over-the-Counter pain pills such as Aspirin & Paracetamol are usually enough to relieve headache, in some cases, prescription medicine may be required.

When headache occurs, trying to relax or putting a cool (or warm) moist cloth on your forehead may also help in reducing the severity of pain.

These things may help in reducing the frequency of headache:-

- Avoid smoking & smoky environments.
- Try not to skip breakfast.
- Massage your shoulder, neck, jaw or scalp.
- Avoid abuse of analgesics as they may cause rebound headache.
- Some foods that may trigger headache in some sensitive people such as: canned meat, processed cheese, nuts & chocolate)



When headache is an emergency?

Return to emergency if headache is accompanied by any of the following:-

- Three or four headaches per week.
- Neck Stiffness & fever.
- Continuous need for more analgesics to relieve pain (more than recommended daily dose).
- Severe vomiting.
- Visual disturbances or other neurological symptoms (difficulty in speaking, numbness or Weakness).
- Or if you have severe headache after a head injury.

