

## Migraine prevention options



Type of treatment	Options	Up side and benefits	Down side
Time	The passage of time may help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 40% go away</li> <li>- 40% get better</li> </ul>	but 20% get worse within 10 years
Lifestyle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• keep a migraine diary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• regular bed and wake up times,</li> <li>• regular exercise and light meals.</li> <li>• nuts and seeds (contain magnesium), whole grains and spinach.</li> <li>• Fibre for breakfast.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• avoid triggers:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• such as certain alcoholic drinks,</li> <li>chocolate, cheese, cured meats and caffeine.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Supplements	Dummy pills (placebo)	Works in 25%	No harm
	Butterbur (supplements or fresh) 75mg x2 a day	works in 50% (placebo works in 25%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• might cause side effects.</li> <li>• Avoid in pregnancy</li> <li>• and with certain medications.</li> </ul>
	Riboflavin 25-400mg daily.	Said to help 1 in 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• urine may turn orange or red,</li> <li>• diarrhoea</li> </ul>
	Coenzyme Q10 100mg x3 a day.	Helps 1 in 3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• might cause mild side effects</li> </ul>
Alternative treatments	Acupuncture	10% better than placebo (35-60% benefit)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• side effects are rare</li> <li>• 10 sessions in 5-8 weeks</li> <li>• rarely available on NHS</li> </ul>
<b>Medication</b>	Try for 2 months before deciding on benefit, stop if unacceptable side effects. Pregnancy & Lactation: Migraines improve a lot in pregnancy. Nothing is truly safe in pregnancy or lactation. But if necessary, propranolol or low dose amitriptyline are probably the safest.		
	Beta blockers e.g. propranolol 20mg twice a day	helps 1 in 4 (45% improve compared with 20% placebo) especially helpful if BP high or anxiety/palpitations	7% stop with side effects: Insomnia, cold hands and feet, reduced exercise tolerance. NOT suitable in asthma
	Topiramate 50-100mg per day	helps 1 in 4 weight loss (if overweight)	NOT safe in pregnancy 10% have side effects including loss of appetite and weight loss (so not for underweight), tingling, memory problems, taste disturbance
	Amitriptyline or Nortriptyline 10mg at night	helps 1 in 4 (consider even lower dose) good for insomnia and pain	dry mouth, drowsy in the morning if dose too high. Blurred vision. Dangerous in overdose.
	Pizotifen 0.5-1.5mg at night	may help most in basilar migraine (vertigo) used more for children than adults helps 1 in 3	weight gain (increased appetite), drowsiness dry mouth, nausea. Not commonly used for adults
	Candesartan 4-16mg	daily helps 1 in 4 lowers blood pressure	blood tests (U+E) after each dose change and annually
	Sodium valproate	helps 1 in 3 rarely used	Dangerous in pregnancy. 15% have significant side effects: Dizziness, vertigo, tremor, nausea
	Magnesium citrate 600mg daily	helps 1 in 4 a good choice if also has constipation	Diarrhoea is very common. Try a much smaller dose