PATIENT INFORMATION

Vitamins and supplements that can help with migraine and headache

There are a variety of supplements that can help with migraine and headache in some people. Of these, only a few have some scientific studies that support their potential benefit for reducing migraine:

Omega 3

There is now good evidence that a diet rich in omega 3 fatty acids reduces headache frequency.
To increase your levels of omega 3 you can eat a diet rich in omega 3; nuts and seeds and their oils (walnuts, flaxseeds, chia seeds and rapeseed oil), fish (especially oily fish), or take supplements of these.

Vitamin D - 1000-4000 International Units (IU) per day (or 25micrograms – 100micrograms per day)

The percentage of subjects with vitamin D deficiency and insufficiency among migraineurs and headache patients has been reported to vary between 45 and 100%. In a number of studies, a low vitamin D level was linked with an increase in frequency of headaches. Some reports show that taking vitamin D supplements may be beneficial in some patients suffering from headaches, especially migraine, to reduce the frequency of headache and migraine.
Therefore, a dose of 1000-4000 IU/d (25mcg – 100mcg) Vitamin D could reduce the frequency of attacks in some migraineurs.

Riboflavin - 400 mg. per day

Riboflavin is Vitamin B2, which is important for energy metabolism. The rationale for using riboflavin in migraine is that it may help boost brain energy metabolism. It is generally well tolerated, although it turns the urine and tears an orange colour. While many multivitamins contain riboflavin, they do not typically have the amounts that have been studied for migraine. (You should not try to achieve 400 mg of riboflavin by taking multivitamins because this may result in toxicity due to excessive amounts of the other vitamins that are part of the tablet.)

Magnesium 300-500 mg. per day

Magnesium is an element that is important for a variety of functions in the body. There is evidence that fluctuations in levels of magnesium, specifically low levels of magnesium, can be a trigger for migraine. Taking magnesium may therefore help reduce these fluctuations in magnesium levels. Magnesium is generally well tolerated, although occasionally it causes stomach upset and diarrhoea. Do not take during pregnancy.

Coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10) 150 mg. per day

CoQ10 is a naturally occurring component of cells that is involved with energy metabolism. For migraine patients, it has been proposed that CoQ10 may help increase brain energy metabolism in a manner that helps reduce migraine (the same rationale as for Vitamin B2). It is extremely well tolerated without any significant side effects. Its main negative is that it can be expensive. You should not take Coenzyme Q10 if you are pregnant, planning a pregnancy or breastfeeding.

Feverfew

Feverfew may also have a role in migraine prevention; it has had a long history of use in traditional and folk medicine. Feverfew can interact with multiple medications, please check with your pharmacist before taking it. Feverfew can increase the risk of bleeding. It is advised to avoid use of feverfew when taking anticoagulant or aspirin like medications. Because of the potential risk to the infant, breast-feeding while using this product is not recommended. Feverfew must not be taken during pregnancy.

For further information please see:

Vitamin D Supplement in Migraine Leaflet – Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust

https://www.migrainetrust.org/living-with-migraine/treatments/supplements-and-herbs/

For further assistance or to receive this information in a different format, please contact the department which created this leaflet.