

# Identify your headache - Detect the type of headache

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Headaches are irritants that could spoil your day. They could take away your efficiency by almost 50 per cent. Often we neglect headaches and try to get on with the daily chores till finally 3-4 hours later the headache becomes unbearable. After hours of this slow torture, finally we pop in a tablet to relieve the pain. If you do a quick analysis, you'll realise that from the moment the headache began to the time you took the tablet, you may have lost many hours of productive time. So the next time you feel the headache coming, first of all try to identify what kind of headache it might be and then go for the cure. Headaches occur for many reasons. They come due to tension or inflammation of the sinus. Sometimes headaches come when the eyes are under strain.

**Tension headache:** The most common type of headache, immortalised in TV commercials where a harried woman is hounded by a demanding husband, bratty children and a tyrannical boss.

- Symptom: Feels like a tight band around your head.

- Cause: Tight muscles in the face, neck and scalp, usually caused by stress.

**Migraine:** A headache has to be pretty nasty to earn the name migraine, which means "half a head" in French.

- Symptom: A throbbing pain, usually on one side of the head. Usually accompanied by nausea, vomiting and sensitivity to light and sound.

- Cause: Uneven levels of the brain chemical serotonin, which causes the blood vessels in the head to constrict, then expand, putting pressure on surrounding nerves. Can be aggravated by the hormonal changes of the menstrual cycle.

- Prewarning: Most migraines are preceded by what's called an aura - flickering points of light or jagged lines that distort your vision.

**Sinus headache:** Pain around the bridge of your nose, jaws and ears. Sometimes pain moves down into the gums. Usually starts in the morning and gets worse throughout the day.

- Cause: When you have a sinus infection, trapped air and pus press against the swollen, tender lining of your sinuses.

- Hard fact: Sinus infections are common but sinus headaches are actually quite rare.

**Cluster headache:** The most excruciating of all headaches.

- Symptom: A piercing, throbbing, burning pain that bores into one side of the head, around or behind the eyes. Can occur several times each day for weeks or months at a time.