“It was great to talk with you.

Thank you for your interest in ‘Managing Migraines.’ I hope you find this tip sheet helpful.

Please give me a call if you have more questions about this or other topics.

As your health coach, I’m ready to help in any way I can.”

Do you have migraines? Learning the facts can help you manage them.

**Portrait of a migraine**

- A migraine is a very intense headache. The pain may pulse or throb in one area of the head. Or it may start as a dull ache and get worse.
- You may or may not have an “aura” before a migraine. An aura is one or more visual disturbances. You may have blurred vision, a temporary blind spot, or tunnel vision. You may see stars or zigzag lines. An aura usually occurs about 10 minutes before a migraine.
- During a migraine, you may be very sensitive to light and sound. You may be nauseated and vomit.
- A migraine usually lasts from 6 to 48 hours.
- After a migraine, you may not be able to think clearly. You may have neck pain. You may also need to sleep more than usual.

**What causes migraines?**

- It is not clear what causes migraines. Experts believe it is related to genes that control certain cells in the brain. People with a history of motion sickness are more likely to have migraines.
- You may notice that some things trigger your migraines. Triggers vary from person to person. Examples may include any of the following:
  - Alcohol
  - Smoking or exposure to smoke
  - Certain foods (see the following page)
  - Physical or emotional stress
  - Anxiety
  - Lack of food or sleep
  - Allergic reactions

(continued on next page)
— Loud noises
— Bright or flashing lights
— Certain odors or perfumes
— Changes in hormones (such as during a woman’s menstrual cycle or with the use of birth control pills)

• Migraines are three times more common in women than in men.

How to treat migraines
• Talk with your doctor about the medicines used to treat migraines. Ask for advice about using medicines that may cause migraines to “cycle” (go away and quickly come back again). Examples include naproxen (brand names Naprelan, Midol, Aleve, Select, Naprosyn, Anaprox, Rugby, and Ec-Naprosyn), ibuprofen (brand names Advil, Midol, NeoProfen, Caldolor, Motrin, Select, Ibu, and Profen), and Excedrin products.
• Treat migraines as early as possible. The headache may be less severe when treated early.
• Drink water to avoid dehydration, especially if you have vomited.
• Rest in a quiet, darkened room.
• Place a cool cloth on your head.

How to prevent migraines
Some common ways to prevent migraines are below. Check those you would like to try.

☐ Keep a headache diary. It will help you recognize your migraine triggers. Write down:
  - When your headaches occur
  - How severe they are
  - What you’ve eaten
  - How much sleep you’ve had
  - Other symptoms
  - Whether or not you’re in your menstrual cycle

☐ Avoid smoking, alcohol, and common food-related triggers, such as:
  - Artificial sweeteners
  - Processed, fermented, pickled, or marinated foods
  - Baked goods
  - Chocolate
  - Dairy products
  - Foods containing tyramine (red wine, aged cheese, smoked fish, chicken livers, figs, certain beans, and many other foods)
  - Fruits (avocado, banana, and citrus)
  - Meats containing nitrates (bacon, hot dogs, salami, and cured meats)

(continued on next page)
- Foods containing monosodium glutamate (MSG)
- Nuts and peanut butter
- Onions

☑ Be active every day. Do something you enjoy.
☑ Limit or avoid caffeine. People respond differently to caffeine, so talk with your doctor about what is right for you.
☑ Learn to relax. Try deep breathing, meditation, yoga, or biofeedback.
☑ Eat meals at regular times.
☑ Drink plenty of liquids, at least eight glasses of water a day.
☑ Get enough sleep. Go to bed and get up at regular times.
☑ If you are overweight or obese, lose weight.
☑ Talk with your doctor about medicines used to prevent migraines.

**Important:**

An intense headache may be a sign of something more serious than a migraine. Call 911 if:

- You are having “the worst headache of your life.”
- You have trouble speaking, seeing, moving, or balancing, especially if you have not had these symptoms with a migraine before.
- Your headaches are more severe when lying down.
- The headache starts very suddenly.
**Take Action**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My SMART* goal for this week</th>
<th>Check when completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do your best to reach the SMART goal you set with your health coach. Write it here. Check the box when you have completed it.</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staying on the path to wellness</th>
<th>Check when completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When you are ready, choose one or two ideas from this tip sheet that you would like to put into action. Set a weekly SMART goal for each one. Write your goals here. Check the boxes when you have completed them.</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SMART Goal 1:

______________________________

______________________________

SMART Goal 2:

______________________________

______________________________

*SMART goals are specific, measurable, appropriate, realistic, and timely. For example, “I will start keeping a headache diary this week, beginning on Monday after work.”

SMART goals help you succeed! If you have any trouble setting your weekly SMART goals, ask your health coach for help.

The information in this tip sheet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice. Before making changes, always talk to your doctor about what is right for you.
Sources: