

October 2022

Migraine is estimated to affect 642,000 people in Aotearoa

Find out more about migraine

Migraine Foundation Aotearoa New Zealand is a registered charity.

- Migraine is the fourth largest cause of disability in New Zealand.
- Migraine affects 2–3 times more women than men and is most common in people of working age.
- Migraine affects 10% of children and can present as abdominal pain and headache.
- Different types of migraine include: vestibular migraine, migraine with aura, hemiplegic migraine, menstrual migraine and silent migraine.
- Approximately 7% of people with migraine have chronic migraine (15 or more headache days a month).

Our mission is to raise awareness of the impact of migraine and provide support for people with migraine in Aotearoa.

Find out more about migraine, including where to get support on our website:

migrainefoundation.org.nz



DID YOU KNOW 1 IN 7 PEOPLE HAVE MIGRAINE?

For more information about migraine visit:

migrainefoundation.org.nz

Do you have migraine?

- Has a headache limited your activities for a day or more in the last three months?
- Are you nauseated or sick to your stomach when you have a headache?
- Does light bother you when you have a headache?

If you answered yes to at least two of these questions, there's a 90% chance you have migraine.

What is migraine?

Migraine is a disabling, neurological condition. It usually presents as a moderate to severe headache affecting one side of the head, but can affect both sides. Migraine is associated with light and noise sensitivity and/or nausea and vomiting.

Migraine can also cause:

- fatigue
- dizziness and vertigo
- speech difficulties
- sensitivity to touch and smell
- mood changes
- numbness and tingling
- neck and shoulder pain
- brain fog
- visual disturbances.

A migraine attack typically lasts between 2–72 hours.

What causes migraine?

Migraine is caused by abnormal brain activity that affects nerve signals, chemicals and blood vessels in and around the brain. Changes in the brain's sensitivity and processing of pain and sensation cause migraine symptoms. The trigeminal nerves and brainstem are areas of the brain that are affected.

Migraine is often inherited through families.

What triggers a migraine attack?

Certain factors can cause the brain of a person with migraine to become hypersensitive, resulting in an attack.

Common triggers include:

- hormones
- changes in routine and stress levels
- skipping meals or fasting
- changes in weather or temperature
- alcohol
- dehydration.

How is migraine treated?

Migraine can't be cured, but symptoms during an attack can be treated. Treatment includes medications and non-medication options.

Medications and lifestyle changes can help prevent further migraine attacks.

Medication options

Pain relief medications, anti-nausea drugs and triptans, a family of medications specifically designed to treat migraine, can be used during an attack.

Preventive medications can be taken every day to help minimise attacks. Examples include beta-blockers, some antidepressants, antiepileptics and medications for high blood pressure.

Migraine-specific preventive medications called calcitonin gene-related peptide (CGRP) monoclonal antibodies are available overseas. Access in Aotearoa is limited and they are not funded by Pharmac.

Botox injections can be effective for chronic migraine but are not always available or funded.

For women with hormone-related migraine, treatment with oestrogen and progesterone or contraception that suppresses ovulation may help.

Non-medication options

Non-medication options for migraine include:

- supplements, such as magnesium, vitamin B2 (riboflavin) and co-enzyme Q10
- neuromodulation devices
- behavioural therapies like mindfulness, meditation, relaxation and biofeedback
- regular exercise, such as walking and yoga.

Maintaining a regular routine also helps.