



**University  
Hospitals Sussex**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Dietary advice for migraine

Patient information

Some foods contain substances called amines, which if taken in large quantities can cause symptoms of migraine. Caffeine can also have the same effect.

Try avoiding the high amine foods for a month. When excluding these foods you should not restrict your overall intake of food. It is important to eat normal meals finding suitable alternatives as necessary.

## **Foods to avoid**

- Alcohol and low alcohol beers and wines
- Avoid all cheese. Including that both in and on foods such as pizza, quiche, cheese powder in crisps and savoury snacks, e.g. Ritz Crackers
- Fromage frais
- All chocolate including chocolate chips, flavoured cereal, hot chocolate and mousse
- Cola based drinks, e.g. Dr. Pepper, Coca Cola
- Coffee and tea and other caffeine stimulants, such as Red Bull or Pro Plus. Decaffeinated tea and coffee are suitable
- Citrus fruits and their juices, e.g. orange, grapefruit, satsumas, lemons
- Other high amine fruits including raisins, figs, dates, pineapple, avocado, plums, bananas, raspberries
- Pork and pork products, e.g. bacon, ham, gammon and sausages
- Game, e.g. venison, pheasant
- Cured meats, e.g. salami, hotdogs
- Broad beans and peas
- Prawns, shrimps, crab
- Bovril, Marmite, Oxo and other meat extracts, gravy granules
- More than one 150g pot of yoghurt per day
- Very cold foods, e.g. ice cream and ice in drinks.

**All other foods are suitable**

## Other related factors

- Avoid periods of fasting, missing or delaying meals or not eating enough
- Eat meals or snacks at even intervals throughout the day, e.g. every 4 hours
- Ensure meals contain some starchy foods, e.g. bread, rice, pasta, cereals
- Try not to go for more than 15 hours without eating, for example, between your evening meal and breakfast
- Avoid fried or very fatty foods
- Ensure you have a starchy snack before playing sport or vigorous activity
- Ensure you drink enough fluid:
  - Adults** 8-10 large cups per day
  - Children** 6-10 cups per day

Migraine can be caused by factors other than diet.

### The most likely triggers to cause an attack are:

- Fatigue or over exertion
- Depression, anxiety
- Raised blood pressure
- Menstruation
- Over the counter cold and pain relief preparations
- Loud noises, glaring lights, e.g. spending long periods on computer or games console
- Oral contraceptives.

## Useful contacts

### The Migraine Trust

2nd Floor, 55-56 Russell Square  
London  
WC1B 4HP

Telephone: **020 7436 1336**

Email: [www.migrainetrust.org](http://www.migrainetrust.org)

### Migraine Action Association

Unit 6, Oakley Hay  
Lodge Business Park  
Great Folds Road  
Great Oakley  
Northamptonshire  
NN18 9AS

Telephone: **0870 0505898**

Email: [www.migraine.org.uk](http://www.migraine.org.uk)

## Contact us

For further information or to provide feedback

### St Richard's Hospital

Telephone: **01243 831498**

Email: [uhsussex.chichesterdietitians@nhs.net](mailto:uhsussex.chichesterdietitians@nhs.net)

### Worthing & Southlands Hospital

Telephone: **01903 286779**

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