

## Is Migraine Fatal?

No. Migraine can cause great discomfort, but it is not fatal or life-threatening. Migraine does not lead to or cause cancer, and it does not cause brain tumors.

## Who Gets Migraine?

Anyone can get migraine, although it has historically been thought of as a woman's disease. Migraine frequently starts in childhood, at similar rates for girls and boys up to puberty. However, by adulthood, migraine is about three times more common in women than in men.

## Is Migraine Inherited?

Migraine is thought to be a hereditary or genetic disorder. About 70% of people with migraine have other family members with the condition.

## What Causes Migraine?

The exact cause of migraine is not known. Research suggests that an imbalance of serotonin, a naturally occurring chemical in the brain, causes the blood vessels of the head to expand or swell. The area around these blood vessels becomes inflamed and irritates nerve endings. This irritation may account for the throbbing pain experienced in the temple or behind the eye.

## How Do You Know If Your Headaches Require A Doctor's Care?

Not all headaches, or all people suffering from headaches, need a doctor's care. If your headaches do not interfere with your daily activities, you may be able to manage them using simple self-care activities. If your headaches cause you to miss or limit activities, you need to talk with your doctor. Be prepared to discuss how often you have headaches, when you have them, and how they are affecting your life.

You can go to [www.headachetest.com](http://www.headachetest.com) to complete a short questionnaire and get a report that may help when you talk with your doctor.

## How Is Migraine Diagnosed?

There is no specific test to prove someone has migraine. Migraine is diagnosed based on both careful review of symptoms and a physical examination. Sometimes the doctor may conduct other tests just to be sure there is nothing else wrong.

The results of the physical examination and testing for migraine may be reported as "normal" or "unrevealing." While this report can be frustrating, it does not mean that the problem is not real.

### Learn More About Migraine

[www.headachetest.com](http://www.headachetest.com)

GlaxoSmithKline Headache Impact Test™ – (HIT)\*

[www.achenet.org](http://www.achenet.org)

or call 800-255-ACHE

American Council for Headache Education

[www.headaches.org](http://www.headaches.org)

or call 888-NHF-5552

National Headache Foundation

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