



MESSA[®]

A smarter approach to
headaches and migraines

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OBJECTIVES

**Understand common
headache types**

Identify triggers

**Review migraine
basics**

Know when to seek care

Apply practical strategies



Why this matters in schools

Headaches affect focus and productivity

- Common cause of staff and student absenteeism
 - Often manageable with practical strategies
 - Understanding triggers improves prevention
-

TYPES OF HEADACHES

1

TENSION

2

MIGRAINE

3

CLUSTER
(rare)

Most headaches are tension or migraine



1

Tension headache

Symptoms

- Dull pressure
 - Frequently stress-related
 - Band-like tightness
 - Mild to moderate intensity
-

Tension headache treatment

Musculoskeletal

- Stretching of neck, shoulders and upper back
- Physical therapy
- Massage therapy

Stress & behavioral

- Relaxation training
- Biofeedback
- Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT)
- Mindfulness

Lifestyle

- Adequate sleep
- Hydration
- Regular exercise



2

Migraine headache

Symptoms

- Throbbing pain
 - Frequently unilateral
 - Moderate to severe intensity
 - Associated symptoms common
-

2

Migraine headache

Associated symptoms

- Nausea
 - Light sensitivity (photophobia)
 - Sound sensitivity (phonophobia)
 - Worsened with activity
-



2

Migraine headache triggers

Stress

**Poor or irregular
sleep patterns**

Skipped meals

Bright light

Noise

Change in weather



Immediate relief strategies

Hydration

Rest in dark/quiet room

Gentle stretching

Medications (OTC)

- Acetaminophen
- Ibuprofen
- Naproxen



Advanced
immediate relief
strategies

Medications

Selective 5-HT_{1B/1D} agonists (*triptans*)

- Oral, nasal, subcutaneous
- Avoid with significant heart disease or stroke history due to vasoconstriction

CGRP receptor antagonists (*gepants*)

- Oral, nasal
- No vasoconstriction

Selective 5-HT_{1F} agonists (*ditans*)

- Causes significant sedation



Advanced
prevention strategies

Medications

Antihypertensives

- Beta blockers
- Calcium channel blockers
- ACE inhibitors

Anticonvulsants

Antidepressants

- Amitriptyline
- Venlafaxine



Advanced
prevention strategies

Medications

CGRP monoclonal antibodies

- Highly effective
- Given as monthly or quarterly injections/infusions

Oral CGRP receptor antagonist (*gepants*)

Onabotulinumtoxin A

- For chronic migraine (≥ 15 headache days/month)
- Injected every 12 weeks



When to seek medical care

- **New neurologic symptoms**
 - **Sudden severe headache**
 - “Worst headache of my life”
 - **Rapidly worsening pattern**
 - **Headaches interfering with family, social and work commitments**
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Key takeaways



Most headaches are manageable

Migraines are common and treatable

Early treatment and preventive strategies improve outcomes

What headache challenges do you see in your environment?

MESSA believes the hardworking people who care for our kids, our schools and our communities **deserve exceptional health benefits and unmatched personal service.**



Our **WHY**



Questions?

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