

FINDING A BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL

There are many different types of therapists. Think about what would be most helpful, and find someone who is the best fit for you and your needs.



If you would like to find a behavioral health professional to help you address stress or difficult emotions related to migraine, there are a variety of ways you can find help.

1. **Ask your primary care provider or neurologist.** A neurologist in particular may be able to recommend a therapist who specializes in chronic pain and/or headache issues.
2. **Talk to a friend.** Word-of-mouth is still one of the best ways to find a therapist who is convenient to you and recommended by those you trust.
3. **Use an online resource.** The American Psychological Association's Psychologist Locator website (locator.apa.org) allows you to find providers based on your location. Filtering by practice area also lets you identify psychologists trained in "health & wellness" and "chronic pain." Psychology Today (psychologytoday.com/us/therapists) also has a therapist locator that allows you to browse local psychologists, counselors, and social workers.
4. **Visit your health insurance website or call your insurer.** By speaking with your insurance company, you can determine what coverage it offers for behavioral and mental health care. Your insurer also can provide a list of mental health providers in the area that accept your insurance.

Once you have a list of potential therapists, call a few to determine if they are accepting patients. If they are able to see you, it can be helpful to ask:

1. **What types of cases do you specialize in?**
Finding a therapist who specializes in health psychology, chronic illness, or chronic pain will be helpful in managing migraine.
2. **What kind of therapy do you practice?**
CBT has the strongest research support for migraine prevention. There are many different theoretical orientations practiced by clinicians, so it may be useful to understand how your therapist might approach your concerns before getting started.
3. **Have you seen cases like mine before?**
Regardless of the provider's specialty, if they have seen many chronic pain, chronic illness, and/or migraine cases, they are more likely to be a good fit.
4. **How do you handle insurance?**
Some therapists take insurance, and some do not. Some partner with only one or two insurers. Make sure you ask whether they accept your insurance. If they don't, it may be useful to call your insurer to see what you will be able to get reimbursed.

WHAT IF I HAVE TROUBLE ACCESSING BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE?



Search the Psychology Today website for therapists who accept patients using a sliding scale or income-based payments. You can also use the Open Path Psychotherapy Collective website (openpathcollective.org) to find a provider offering sessions from \$30–\$60.



Ask your doctor about free or low-cost mental health clinics. Many cities have local options staffed by trainees and supervised by licensed clinicians where the services may be free or very low cost.



Find an app. Options like Talkspace (talkspace.com) and Betterhelp (betterhelp.com) let you work with a therapist online or via text message. Rates are likely to be lower than seeing an in-person provider.



Look for a support group. A migraine or chronic illness support group is a great resource for both social and emotional support. Your primary care provider, neurologist, or even a local hospital might be able to help you find a support group.