

ENVIRONMENTAL WELLNESS

For individuals with migraine, the environment can affect the frequency or strength of attacks. Certain environmental factors — referred to as “triggers” and often working in combination — may bring on an attack or worsen existing symptoms.



For individuals who do not have migraine disease, environmental factors are unlikely to trigger a migraine attack. Alternatively, it might require many **triggers** combined before they start to experience symptoms. But people with migraine disease have a much lower threshold: They might only need to experience one or two triggers before an attack is provoked or made worse.

Monitoring environmental factors can help you understand which triggers you can tolerate and which you may want to avoid. Not every person is affected by environmental factors, but some may feel particularly sensitive to changes in the environment. **Track your migraine attacks** to determine which environmental influences might play a role in your attacks.

AT HOME

Common triggers:



NOISE



SMELLS



STRESS

What you can do:

- Limit outside noise (traffic, neighbors) and inside noise (vacuum, TV, radio) as much as possible.
- Ask people you live with who smoke to do so outside, away from entrances to the house, and wash their clothes separately.
- Avoid the use of harsh chemicals, detergents, and other household products, as these often have strong smells that may trigger migraine attacks.

What is a weekend migraine?

Waking up to pain on a Saturday morning is not uncommon for those with migraine. As stress subsides after your work week, levels of stress hormones drop. Ironically, this can cause a migraine attack. Because of this pattern, these attacks are often referred to as “weekend” or “let down” migraine attacks.

Keeping to a steady routine during the weekend is important: Avoid oversleeping, which may trigger these migraine attacks. Try to bring stress-relief activities into your work week to avoid a buildup of stress from Monday to Friday. Yoga, easy walks, meditation, and deep breathing are good examples.



ENVIRONMENTAL WELLNESS (CONT.)

AT WORK

Common triggers:



LIGHTS



SCREENS



POSTURE

What you can do:

- Try to avoid sitting directly next to or under bright lights at work. Sunglasses or glasses with polarized lenses may help in more extreme scenarios.
- Use a glare monitor on your computer screen or adjust the monitor so glare is less bothersome for your eyes. Some people feel that special “blue-light blocking” glasses are useful for reducing eye strain when using electronic screens.
- Take breaks from the computer to stand, walk, or move around — this is good for both your eyes and your posture.
- Follow the 20/20/20 rule. Every 20 minutes, look 20 feet away from your screen for 20 seconds.
- Practice good posture when working, and consider using a headset when talking on the phone.

OUTSIDE

Common triggers:



WEATHER



ALTITUDE



HEAT/ SUNLIGHT



POLLUTION

What you can do:

- Monitor weather, barometric pressure, and air pollution levels. You may be able to proactively take some medications if you know a storm or change in weather is coming. Talk to your doctor about how best to track this.
- Wear sunglasses or a hat when you know you will be in the sun.
- Stay hydrated — dehydration is a common side effect on hot, sunny days, and can also trigger a migraine attack.
- Pay attention while traveling to changes in altitude. Your health care provider can talk to you about options for easing symptoms of altitude adjustment and related migraine attacks.
- Avoid going outside for long periods of time on days with high levels of air pollution.

