



Migraine and Self Care

Living with a disease like migraine affects every single part of your life. It's essential for those with migraine to take care of themselves and their mental health. Easier said than done, right? That's why the American Migraine Foundation put together a few ways you can prioritize your mental health while living with migraine.

Make self-care part of your routine

Minimizing stress and finding ways to relax can help reduce the frequency and severity of migraine attacks. Some ways to add self-care to your routine include practicing yoga, meditating, and engaging in activities you enjoy. Here are some tips from our community:

5 Migraine Self-Care Tips from People Living with Migraine



1. Spend time outdoors

Spending 20 minutes outdoors can help lower stress hormone levels. Community members recommend activities like daily walks, gardening, coaching your children's sports teams, and swimming to get the stress-relieving benefits of nature.



2. Pamper yourself

Make time to do what makes you feel happy and relaxed. Some ideas include creating an at-home spa, curling up with a warm drink, watching a movie, or taking a hot bath.



3. Create art

Expressing your emotions through art provides a positive outlet to process life and reduce stress. From painting, drawing, coloring, needleworking, scrapbooking, woodworking, writing, and more, there are numerous ways to indulge your creative side.



4. Cook and bake meals

Cooking and baking are process-driven activities, so each step can help you unwind and provide a sense of accomplishment. Plus, planning meals may help you maintain a more balanced diet and identify potential food triggers.



5. Get Moving

Staying active is beneficial for both physical and mental health. Movement releases endorphins, which can improve mood and lower stress levels. Yoga, stretching, walking, running, dancing, and other forms of exercise are all great ways to introduce more movement into your life.

Advocate for yourself and others

Migraine is a debilitating disease that affects over 39 million Americans and their families. Despite the fact that it touches nearly one in four households, it can still be a lonely illness. Many don't feel empowered to speak out about their pain due to the stigma and misconceptions surrounding migraine. However, the best way to reduce this stigma is by being vocal. Here are three ways to advocate for yourself and others:

3 Ways to Practice Migraine Self-Advocacy



Share your experience

Speak to family and friends about your experience with migraine so that they can support you during your good days and your bad days. This is also a way to find and connect with others who are navigating migraine to get their support and advice.



Find the right doctor/provider

Determining the best treatment plan for you starts with finding the right specialist. [Do your research to locate a headache specialist or provider who has experience with migraine.](#) Then, before your appointment, compile a list of questions to ask so that nothing goes unanswered.



Know your rights at work and school

Workplaces and schools can be difficult places for people with migraine because it's so often stressful, bright and loud. You have options.

If migraine "substantially limits one or more major life activities," you may be protected under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and should request accommodations from the [Department of Labor's Job Accommodation Network](#).

Similarly, most schools and universities have offices and processes in place to help students with migraine succeed. You can speak to school administrators and teachers to suggest accommodations and find workarounds so that migraine doesn't disadvantage your performance.

Maintain healthy habits

Maintaining healthy habits is one way to help manage migraine symptoms for people of all ages. Habits like taking medications and making note of whether they're working and finding ways to manage stress, can benefit people living with migraine. Here is a checklist to use when trying to develop healthier habits for better symptom management:

Migraine Healthy Habits Checklist

Do you:

- | | |
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| ☐ Take your medications on time every day? | ☐ Have a moderate or no caffeine intake? |
| ☐ Have a regular sleep schedule? | ☐ Drink plenty of water? |
| ☐ Exercise regularly? | ☐ Practice self-care? |
| ☐ Eat meals on time? | ☐ Otherwise manage stress? |
| ☐ Eat fresh, unprocessed foods whenever possible? | |

If you can't check all of these off, that's OK! Set some goals and work on what you can to find a balance that helps relieve your migraine symptoms.

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[The American Migraine Foundation](#) is committed to improving the lives of those living with this debilitating disease—but we can't do it alone. [Donate today](#) to help support migraine research. Together, we are as relentless as migraine.

American Migraine Foundation

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