DISCLAIMER: The content of this book is based on research conducted by Hyman Enterprises, LLC, unless otherwise noted. The information is presented for educational purposes only and is not intended to diagnose or prescribe for any medical or psychological condition, nor to prevent, treat, mitigate or cure such conditions. The information contained herein is not intended to replace a one-on-one relationship with a doctor or qualified healthcare professional. Therefore, this information is not intended as medical advice, but rather a sharing of knowledge and information based on research and experience. Hyman Enterprises, LLC encourages you to make your own health care decisions based on your judgment and research in partnership with a qualified healthcare professional.

Please do not stop, adjust, or modify your dose of any prescribed medications without the direct supervision of your healthcare practitioner.

These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. The information in this book is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.
# The Migraine Solution

## Table of Contents

### The Problem

- The Problem with Our Approach to Migraines ................................................................. 3
- The Real Causes of Migraines ......................................................................................... 4

### The Solution

- Food Allergy/Bowel and Gut Imbalances ..................................................................... 6
- Chemical Triggers ......................................................................................................... 6
- Hormonal Imbalances ................................................................................................. 6
- Magnesium Deficiency ............................................................................................... 7
- Mitochondrial Imbalances .......................................................................................... 7
- What to Eat .................................................................................................................. 8
- Supplements ............................................................................................................... 10
- Exercise ...................................................................................................................... 10
- Reduce Stress ............................................................................................................. 10
- Sleep ........................................................................................................................... 11

### Conclusion................................................................................................................ 13

### References............................................................................................................... 14

© 2018 Hyman Enterprises, LLC. All Rights Reserved.
More than 10 million Americans have migraines, creating a burden of mostly unnecessary suffering. These severe, nearly disabling headaches can occur anywhere from once a year to three to four times a week. They can last for hours and up to days and are often associated with an aura, light sensitivity, nausea, vomiting, and severe throbbing pain on one or both sides of the head. In some cases, migraines are even associated with stroke-like symptoms or paralysis.

The cost to society is enormous. Migraine headaches add between 13 and 17 billion dollars to our health care costs each year. These costs include medications, emergency room visits, hospitalizations, physician services (primary care and specialty), laboratory and diagnostic services, and managing the side effects of treatment.

Migraines have indirect costs, too. Headache is the most frequent pain-related complaint among workers. Focusing specifically on migraines, one study found that the annual cost to employers exceeded 14.5 billion dollars, of which 7.9 billion was due to absenteeism and $5.4 billion to diminished productivity.

You can understand, then, why migraines become a HUGE problem both to those who suffer and to society as a whole.

**THE PROBLEM WITH OUR APPROACH TO MIGRAINES**

Migraines are hard to treat and very difficult to prevent with conventional approaches. A host of preventive drugs—including calcium channel blockers, beta-blockers, anti-seizure medications, and antidepressants—work poorly, if at all. Most of these drugs are accompanied by frequent side effects. Some doctors are now even using Botox to paralyze neck muscles in the hopes of easing migraines.

A new class of medication called triptans (like Imitrex, Maxalt, and Zomig) can stop a migraine once it starts. Though these have made migraine sufferers handle the attacks better, they also have serious potential side effects, including strokes, plus they are expensive.

Still other treatments can lead to addiction or dependence.

Overall, it’s not a pretty picture, and for many migraine sufferers none of these treatments work very well or at all.

The problem with migraines is the same one we see so often in conventional medicine: we treat the symptoms, not the cause. By using Functional Medicine, I have been able to get nearly 100 percent of my patients migraine-free within days or weeks!
THE REAL CAUSES OF MIGRAINES

Many of my migraine patients are doctors themselves and are often at the end of their rope. One was a physician from the Mayo Clinic, the mecca of conventional medicine.

This woman had severe, disabling migraines that made it nearly impossible for her to function at work. She depended on oxycodone (a strong morphine-like narcotic) and Zofran (a powerful anti-nausea drug used for chemotherapy patients).

She had seen every specialist at the Mayo Clinic and had traveled far and wide to other top neurology headache centers but never found relief. Unfortunately, everyone she saw focused on her headaches and not the other symptoms that held all of the clues to her problem.

Migraines are no different from any other disease. It’s simply the name we call a set of symptoms common in groups of people. This name tells us nothing about the cause of the symptoms, which may be very different depending on the person. In fact, there may be more than 20 different causes of migraine headaches!

My job involves being a medical detective and finding these causes. I don’t simply prescribe powerful symptom-suppressive drugs. Not anymore, anyway. I remember very well working in the emergency room, before my Functional Medicine days, treating all the chronic migraine patients with intravenous narcotics and nausea medication. I felt bad for them, but worse that I didn’t have a way to prevent the migraines from coming back.

Now I do.

Which leads me back to the doctor who came to see me from the Mayo Clinic who suffered migraines nearly every day for years with no relief. I took a multi-faceted approach to help her.

First, I asked her a lot of questions and learned that in addition to her migraines, she suffered from many symptoms, including palpitations, severe constipation, anxiety, insomnia, muscle cramps, and menstrual cramps.

All of these symptoms, which told me that her whole system was tight, irritable, and crampy, were connected. These symptoms are usually associated with severe magnesium deficiency, which often results from poor diet, caffeine, sugar, alcohol, and stress.

I put her on high doses of magnesium and cleaned up her diet. Within a couple of days, she was migraine-free and never suffered another migraine.

She’s not the only success story.

Another patient had disabling migraines for 45 years and could not have a social life or plan anything because she spent most of her time in bed with the lights out. She also had an allergy to eggs.
When we eliminated the eggs from her diet, her headaches disappeared. No eggs, no migraines. Three months after treatment, she felt so good she decided to have an egg and ended up in the hospital with a three-day migraine, confirming our original finding.

Another patient always had migraines before her period, along with severe PMS, bloating, sugar cravings, breast tenderness, and irritability. These symptoms are all related to hormonal imbalances. She had too much estrogen and too little progesterone. Getting her hormones back in balance relieved her migraines.

And yet another patient had genetic problems with her mitochondria and energy metabolism and needed high doses of vitamin B2 and coenzyme Q10 to get relief.

Another woman who came to see me had persistent abdominal bloating after eating, which told me she had overgrowth of bacteria in her small bowel. When we cleared out these bacteria with a non-absorbed antibiotic, her migraines went away and didn’t return.

One patient who lived on Diet Coke didn’t get rid of her migraines until she gave up the artificial sweetener aspartame.

And another had low blood sugar episodes that triggered migraines. Eating small, frequent meals of whole foods stopped the headaches.

And finally, there was the woman who got headaches after exercising in the heat or with dehydration. We made sure she stayed hydrated, and her migraines were permanently eliminated.

As you can see, even though these patients all had the same symptoms, their treatment was different. Getting the full story is so important. To heal from migraines, you must locate the causes of your headaches and address your specific underlying issues if you want to be free of pain.
As I’ve been saying, the reasons for migraines are not all the same. You have to find the underlying cause. To help you on that journey, here are the most important causes of migraines, their associated symptoms, tests to help identify problems, and treatments you can start using today.

**FOOD ALLERGY/BOWEL AND GUT IMBALANCES**

- **The symptoms and causes:** Fatigue, brain fog, bloating, irritable bowel syndrome, joint or muscle pain, postnasal drip, and sinus congestion are all symptoms of food allergies or imbalances in the gut.

- **The testing:** Check an IgG food allergy panel and also check a celiac panel because wheat and gluten are among the biggest causes of headaches and migraines. Stool testing and urine testing for yeast or bacterial imbalances that come from the gut can also be helpful.

- **The treatment:** An elimination diet that gets rid of gluten, dairy, eggs, and yeast is a good way to start. Corn can also be a common problem. Getting the gut healthy with enzymes, probiotics, and omega-3 fats is also important.

**CHEMICAL TRIGGERS**

- **The symptoms and causes:** Sluggishness, depression, chronic fatigue are all symptoms of chemical migraines. A processed-food diet including aspartame, MSG (monosodium glutamate), nitrates (in deli meats), and sulfates (found in wine, dried fruit, and food from salad bars), as well as tyramine-containing foods, like chocolate and cheese, are also triggers.

- **The testing:** Eliminate the above foods from your diet. Aspartame, MSG, and nitrates should be eliminated permanently. However, you can reintroduce sulfates, chocolate, and cheese after 21 days of elimination to find out if they trigger migraines.

- **The treatment:** Get rid of additives, sweeteners, sulfites, and processed food. Eat a diet rich in whole foods and phytonutrients.

**HORMONAL IMBALANCES**

- **The symptoms and causes:** Premenstrual syndrome with bloating, fluid retention, cravings, irritability, breast tenderness, and menstrual cramps are symptoms associated with hormonal migraines. They may be caused by the use of oral contraceptive pills or hormone replacement therapy, or even just
being premenopausal, which leads to too much estrogen and not enough progesterone because of changes in ovulation.

- **The testing:** Blood or saliva hormone testing looks for menopausal changes or too much estrogen.
- **The treatment:** Eat a whole-foods, low-glycemic-load, high-phytonutrient diet with flax, soy, and cruciferous vegetables. Use herbs such as Vitex, along with magnesium and B6. Avoid alcohol, caffeine, sugar, and refined carbohydrates. Exercise and stress reduction also help.

### Magnesium Deficiency

- **The symptoms and causes:** Anything that feels tight or crampy like headaches, constipation, anxiety, insomnia, irritability, sensitivity to loud noises, muscle cramps or twitching and palpitations are all linked to magnesium deficiency.
- **The testing:** Check red blood cell magnesium levels. Even this can be normal in the face of total body deficiency, so treatment with magnesium, based on the symptoms, is the first choice.
- **The treatment:** Magnesium glycinate, citrate, or aspartate in doses that relieve symptoms or until you get loose bowels. If you have kidney disease of any kind, do this only with a doctor’s supervision.

### Mitochondrial Imbalances

- **The symptoms and causes:** Fatigue, muscle aching, and brain fog can all be symptoms of a mitochondrial imbalance. However, sometimes the only symptom can be migraines.
- **The testing:** Checking urinary organic acids can be helpful to assess the function of the mitochondria and energy production.
- **The treatment:** Taking 400 mg of riboflavin (B2) twice a day, and 100 to 400 mg a day of coenzyme Q10 can be helpful, as can other treatments to support the mitochondria.

These are the most common causes, but other root causes of migraines include vitamin B deficiency and imbalances in melatonin (1 or 2 milligrams at night have been shown to help relieve migraines).

Keep in mind that sometimes a combination of treatments is necessary. Other treatments can be helpful in selected cases, such as herbal therapies (like feverfew and butterbur), acupuncture, homeopathy, massage, and osteopathic treatment to fix structural problems.
WHAT TO EAT

While different causes of migraines demand different treatments, I have found the 10-Day Detox Diet can help almost everyone suffering from migraines.

The first step to curb inflammation, eliminate migraines, and feel better is to eliminate the junk. It’s simple. First, you stop eating certain addictive and inflammatory foods for 10 days, and then, after 10 days, you’ll have the opportunity to add some of these foods back in to see how your body responds.

Eliminating inflammatory and toxic foods is just part of the 10-Day Detox Diet. The other part involves adding in the good stuff—real, whole foods that nourish your body with every single bite. We all know that food can harm us, but we should all take advantage of the fact that food can heal us, too.

Here are some ways you will automatically heal migraines just by following the 10-Day Detox Diet:

• **Pull the sugar.** A diet full of empty calories and quickly absorbed sugar, liquid sugar calories, and refined carbohydrates—all of which convert to sugar—creates high insulin levels, eventually leading to insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes. Chronically high insulin levels lead to many problems, including inflammation, high blood pressure, poor sex drive, increased risk for cancer, and depression. The most important thing you can do to reduce your risk of type 2 diabetes and obesity or reverse their impact is to eliminate or dramatically reduce sugar in all its many disguises.

• **Eat Fat:** Use ONLY good, healthy fats and clean (grass-fed or sustainably raised) animal foods. You should include fat at each meal. The best sources are avocados, extra-virgin olive oil, nuts and seeds, extra-virgin coconut butter, organic full-fat coconut milk, whole organic eggs, fatty fish (sardines, wild salmon, mackerel, or herring), grass-fed lamb, bison, or beef or organic poultry.

• **Stock up on real foods.** Whole, unprocessed real foods balance your blood sugar, reduce inflammation and oxidative stress, and help reduce migraines. Whole, real foods turn on all the right gene messages, promote a healthy metabolism, reverse insulin resistance and diabetes, and prevent aging and age-related diseases like diabetes and heart disease.

• **Eat about 4 to 6 ounces of protein with each meal.** If you make a fist, that’s approximately portion size we’re talking about per meal.

• **Avoid all gluten and dairy.**

• **Avoid all processed junk food,** including sodas, juices, and diet drinks, which impact sugar and lipid metabolism. Liquid sugar calories are the biggest contributors to obesity, diabetes, and heart disease.
• **Eliminate all hydrogenated fat**, which is found in margarine, shortening, and processed oils, as well as many baked goods and processed foods.

• **Eat only fat, protein, and veggies for breakfast.** You can choose from a variety of protein shakes or delicious egg recipes (omega-3 eggs are ideal) to wake up your metabolism first thing in the morning.

• **Include flaxseeds** by adding two to four tablespoons of ground flaxseeds to your food every day. Flax is tasty in shakes or sprinkled on salads or whole-grain cereal.

• **Avoid beans and grains.**

• **Drink a minimum of 8 glasses of pure, clean water** throughout the day.

• **Eat the rainbow.** Eat at least 8 to 10 servings of vegetables every day, which contain disease-fighting vitamins, minerals like magnesium, fiber, phytonutrients, antioxidants, and anti-inflammatory molecules.

• **Use salt,** because when you cut down carbs your body needs more salt.

• **Try not to eat three hours before bed.**

The 10-Day Detox Diet is naturally anti-inflammatory because it removes these foods that create harm and increases all of the wonderful anti-inflammatory nutrients your body needs, using whole foods to heal migraines and other issues.

I’ve provided more details about the 10-Day Detox Diet and how to reintroduce foods to maintain that plan for life in *Food: What the Heck Do I Eat?*

This book is founded on the principle that food is medicine. It is information. Food literally controls almost every function of your body and mind. And it connects almost everything that matters in our lives.

Food connects us to one another and to our bodies; it can reinvigorate our health, bring families together, restore vibrant communities, improve the economy and the environment, reduce pollution, and even help our kids get better grades and avoid eating disorders, obesity, and drug abuse. Food can even reduce poverty, violence, homicide, and suicide.

I wrote *Food* as a roadmap, based on the best and latest science of what to eat, to dispel the confusion and contention that keeps you overweight, sick, and unhappy.

What you put on your fork is the most important thing you do every day. It influences your capacity to live a rich, energetic, connected, soulful life—a life in which you have the energy to care for yourself, to love your friends and family, to help your neighbor, to fully show up for your work in the world, and to live your dreams.

If you enjoy real, whole, fresh foods that you cook using real ingredients, you are positively affecting everything around you.
SUPPLEMENTS

Supplements are important. Along with a healthy diet and exercise program, they can dramatically reduce your risk for migraines.

Here are the supplements I have found most useful in my practice to treat migraines:

1. **PhytoMulti Multivitamin by Metagenics** (two tablets a day with food).
2. **OmegaGenics EPA-DHA 720 Fish Oil** (twice a day with food).
3. **PGX** (3-6 capsules or 2.5 to 5 grams of powder before each meal with a cold glass of water).
4. **Magnesium** (take 300 to 600 milligrams twice a day in the form of magnesium glycinate or citrate).
5. **Riboflavin** or vitamin B2 (400 milligrams a day—it will turn your urine dark yellow, but don’t worry about it).

EXERCISE

Getting regular exercise can be especially beneficial if you have migraines that are linked to hormone imbalances.

I encourage 30 to 45 minutes of cardiovascular exercise at least six times a week. You may try interval training if you are feeling stronger. I also encourage strength training to build muscle and reduce body fat composition.

REDUCE STRESS

Stress alone can cause many chronic diseases. Take a migraine for example. Stress often triggers a cascade of events like tension, lack of breath, or high blood pressure, which in turn can trigger a migraine.

Finding ways to manage stress and to relax is essential for dealing with nearly all chronic health conditions, including migraines.

Learn to reduce stress by doing regular relaxation exercises such as yoga, tai chi, meditation, breathing, guided imagery, or whatever it takes to engage the relaxation nervous system, which can lower your inflammation and blood sugar levels as well as increase metabolism and help with your overall health. Try classes, buy CDs (you can try my UltaCalm audio program), try therapy, or just go out and have fun. Do whatever it takes to hit the pause button on a daily basis and maintain your health.
SLEEP

I used to think that “MD” stood for “medical deity” and meant I didn’t have to follow the same sleep rules as every other human being. I stayed up late working long shifts in the emergency room, ignoring the demands of my body. It wasn’t until I learned that shift work leads to a shortened life expectancy that I quit.

Unfortunately, our lives are infiltrated with constant stimuli that keep us revved up until the moment we go to bed. It’s no wonder so many of us have trouble getting restful sleep.

Instead of pushing through until your head hits the pillow, try to take a little “holiday” during the two hours before bed. Create a sleep ritual—a special set of little things you do before bed—in order to guide your body into a deep, healing sleep.

Here are some tips on how to restore your natural sleep rhythm. It may take weeks or months, but using these tools in a coordinated way will eventually reset your biological rhythms:

- **Practice the regular rhythms of sleep.** Go to bed and wake up at the same time each day.
- **Use your bed for sleep and romance only**, not for television or even reading.
- **Create an aesthetic environment that encourages sleep.** Use serene and restful colors and eliminate clutter and distraction.
- **Create total darkness and quiet.** Consider using eyeshades and earplugs.
- **Avoid caffeine.**
- **Avoid alcohol.** It may help you get to sleep initially, but it causes interruptions throughout the night, resulting in poor-quality sleep.
- **Get at least 20-minutes exposure to daylight daily.** The light from the sun enters your eyes and triggers your brain to release specific chemicals and hormones like melatonin that are vital to healthy sleep, mood, and aging.
- **Eat no later than three hours before bed.** Eating a heavy meal prior to bed will lead to a bad night’s sleep.
- **Don’t exercise vigorously after dinner.** It excites the body and makes it more difficult to get to sleep.
- **Write your worries down.** One hour before bed, write down the things that are causing you anxiety and make your to-do list for the next day to reduce your worry. It will free up your mind and energy to move into deep and restful sleep.
• **Take a hot salt/soda aromatherapy bath.** Raising your body temperature before bed helps to induce sleep. A hot bath also relaxes your muscles and reduces tension physically and psychically. By adding 1 to 1 ½ cups Epsom salt (magnesium sulfate) and 1 to 1 ½ cups baking soda (sodium bicarbonate) to your bath, you will gain the benefits of magnesium absorbed through your skin and the alkaline-balancing effects of the baking soda, both of which help with sleep.

• **Get a massage or stretch before bed.** This helps relax the body, making it easier to fall asleep.

• **Warm your middle.** This raises your core temperature and helps trigger the proper chemistry for sleep. A hot-water bottle, heating pad, or a warm body, can do the trick.

• **Avoid medications that interfere with sleep.** These include sedatives (which are used to treat insomnia, but ultimately lead to dependence and disruption of normal sleep rhythms), antihistamines, stimulants, cold medication, steroids, and headache medication that contains caffeine.

• **Use herbal therapies.** Try 200 mg of passion flower, or 320 mg to 480 mg of valerian root extract standardized to 0.2 percent valerenic acid one hour before bed.

• **Take 200 mg to 400 mg of magnesium citrate or glycinate before bed.** This relaxes the nervous system and muscles.

• **Other supplements and herbs can be helpful in getting some shuteye.** Try calcium, theanine (an amino acid from green tea), GABA, 5-HTP, and magnolia. (I like a product called Kavinace UltraPM that has a form of GABA, melatonin, and 5-HTP all in one. It works well for many of my patients.)

• **Try 1 mg to 3 mg of melatonin at night,** which can help stabilize your sleep rhythms.

• **Get a relaxation, meditation, or guided imagery CD.** Any of these may help you get to sleep.
CONCLUSION

We have the science, the understanding, and the tools to deal with this chronic problem. There is no need to wait for any more studies. I have been treating migraine sufferers in my practice for over 15 years with dramatic success.

In fact, just recently, one of my patients told me that for the first time in her life she no longer suffered from migraines. It had previously been so bad that she had to call in sick from work a couple of times a month!

By taking these steps and seeking out the underlying causes of migraines, you can dramatically improve your health.

If you are willing to tweak your diet and lifestyle and take a few supplements, your health may change dramatically—and so will your life.

Even armed with these strategies, finding the right foods to eliminate migraines can sometimes feel confusing. That’s why I wrote Food: What the Heck Should I Eat?, to help you undo all the beliefs about food that are making you fat and sick and replace them with a new understanding that will lead to health and longevity.

I believe that cultivating and consuming real, whole food is the answer to many of our world’s problems. How we grow it, produce it, and eat it affects almost every aspect of our lives and our society. Food is an honest how-to guide designed to answer the question, “What the heck should I eat?”

Food is the doorway to living well and loving well—and to fixing much of what’s wrong with our world. You have the power to heal migraines, starting with your very next meal.

If you have tried the 10-Day Detox Diet for up to 40 days and are still not completely better, then you should seek out a Functional Medicine practitioner. You can come see one of my Functional Medicine doctors at The UltraWellness Center or at the Cleveland Clinic Center for Functional Medicine, where we treat people from all over the world. You can also find a trained practitioner near you through the Institute for Functional Medicine.

The answers are right in front of you. Treat the underlying causes of your illness, and you will begin to experience vibrant health once more.
REFERENCES


