

Wake Forest Baptist Health [Center for Integrative Medicine](#)

Healing Headaches Naturally

[Dr. Kathi Kemper's](#) 10 Tips

1. Monitor symptoms. Keep a [Headache Symptom Diary](#) to help identify triggers (see #2) and monitor responses to treatments.
2. Watch for weather, air pollution, tobacco smoke, carbon monoxide exposure, menses and flashing bright lights. Catch headaches early and treat them before they escalate. Consider cool dark room, ice packs to head, neck or forehead. Consider mint roll on to forehead and temples.
3. Avoid triggers – allergens, certain foods (aged cheeses, processed meats, hot dogs, smoked fish, nuts, chocolate), artificial flavors, colors, and sweeteners, MSG.
4. Sleep at least 8 to 9 hours per night. Fatigue frequently triggers migraines. Avoid caffeine.
5. Drink water and eat regularly. Avoid skipping meals.
6. Exercise vigorously in the morning or early afternoon at least 5 days per week for 40 to 60 minutes. Exercise boosts endorphins and eases pain.
7. Manage stress – music, biofeedback, guided imagery, meditation, prayer, autogenic training (CareNet 336-716-7339 or Jeff Feldman 336-716-8400).
8. Supplements – consider with your doctor. (See CIM Website [Dietary Supplements](#) for brand information.)
 - ◆ Vitamin B2: 200 milligrams twice daily (prevention)
 - ◆ Vitamin B6: Up to 50 milligrams daily in a B complex (prevention)
 - ◆ Calcium: 1000 milligrams daily combine (prevention plus)
 - ◆ Magnesium: 350 – 500 milligrams daily (excess leads to diarrhea)
 - ◆ Coenzyme Q10: 50 – 100 milligrams 2-3 times daily (prevention)
 - ◆ Other Considerations:
 - Alpha lipoic acid 600 milligrams daily (prevention)
 - 5-HTP starting with 25 milligrams daily (prevention)
 - Omega-3 fatty acid supplements (Fish Oil) (prevention)
 - Ginger for nausea (treatment)
 - butterbur or feverfew – use British or European imports
Butterbur (Petadolex) 50 – 100 milligrams twice daily (prevention)
Feverfew: 25 – 50 milligrams daily (prevention)
 - TigerBalm ointment as a neck and shoulder massage (treatment)
9. Massage – start with professional bodywork (WFUBMC 336-716-8304). Have someone you trust learn to provide it regularly (3 to 5 times weekly). Osteopathy and chiropractic can also help. If Healing Touch helps today, consider having someone in your family take training classes (WFUBMC 336-716-6067).
10. Acupuncture – can help a lot. [Boyd Bailey, Lic Ac.](#) (Winston-Salem, NC – 336-777-0037), [Keoni Teta, Lic Ac.](#) (Winston-Salem, NC – 336-724-4452), [SiWei Wang, Lic Ac.](#) (Clemmons and Winston-Salem, NC – 336-659-8120).

Address other conditions – allergies, anemia, anxiety, braces, dental infections, depression, tight headbands, and sinus infections.

If you notice any sudden changes in symptoms or problems seeing, talking, hearing, or moving, please contact your primary care physician promptly.

Dr. Kathi Kemper – Pediatrics

Dr. Annette Grefe – Neurology
www.wakehealth.edu/CIM

Updated 5/2010