



Migraines in Pregnancy

- Migraine without aura
 - Tends to improve in pregnancy, especially in the 2nd and 3rd trimesters
 - May initially worsen in the 1st trimester, before improving
 - After delivery, the abrupt decrease in estradiol may aggravate migraines
 - New-onset aura may develop during pregnancy in women with pre-existing migraine *without* aura
- Migraine with aura
 - Does not typically change in frequency
 - First-ever migraine during pregnancy is likely to be with aura (a first severe headache during this time should be further investigated for another underlying cause)
- Treatment:
 - Spare use of Tylenol
 - Trigger injections (see separate handout)
 - Regular stretching (see separate handout)
 - Acupuncture
 - Massage therapy
 - Physical therapy
 - Lifestyle modifications
 - **Establish daily routines.**
 - **Maintain regular sleep patterns.** Go to sleep and wake up at the same time each day.
 - **Exercise regularly.** For example, aerobic exercise for at least 30 minutes three times a week will help reduce frequency and/or severity of migraine.
 - **Eat regular meals.** Do not skip meals, and eat a good, healthy breakfast.
 - **Drink plenty of water.** Drink at least 32 ounces of water daily with added electrolyte-enhanced beverages as needed.
 - **Discontinue caffeine.**
 - **Reduce stress.** Try to avoid conflicts and resolve disputes calmly.
 - **Schedule a relaxation period.** Include strategies such as:
 - ◇ Slow, deep breaths
 - ◇ Focusing the mind on a relaxing image or scene
 - ◇ Soft, relaxing lighting and sounds
 - **Avoid known migraine triggers.**
 - **Discontinue smoking.**
- During lactation:
 - Therapies as above
 - Spare use of Tylenol or nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medications (ibuprofen is preferred)
 - Triptans: may consider sumatriptan (Imitrex) injection or eletriptan (Relpax)
 - Preventative: may consider antihypertensive medications (propranolol, metoprolol, or labetalol)
 - To learn more about the safety of medications during lactation, the following website is a good resource: <http://toxnet.nlm.nih.gov/newtoxnet/lactmed.htm>