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Headache Diary

Keeping a headache diary may help identify the types of headaches you have and lead to effective treatment. You also may be able to identify headache triggers, such as certain foods, stressful events, interruptions in sleep patterns, or physical activities. If you bring your headache diary to your doctor's appointment, your doctor will be able to see your headache history and any patterns to your headaches.

Consider the following while filling out your headache diary:

- When did the headache begin?
- How long did the headache last?
- How often do you get headaches?
- Do they occur at the same time every day? If so, when?
- If you are a woman, do you get headaches before or near menstruation?
- How would you describe your headache: throbbing, steady and constant, pounding, stabbing, or splitting pain?
- Is the pain on only one side of your head or all over?
- Have you been exposed to known headache triggers that could be linked to the onset of your headache? Known triggers include certain foods (such as chocolate, cheese, wine), some physical activities (including sexual), changes in the weather, bright light, strong odors, noise, stress, and interruptions in your sleep pattern.
- Do you experience any recognizable symptoms before the headache starts, such as fatigue, yawning, excitability, or high energy?
- Do you have neurological symptoms such as visual disturbances (seeing flashes or sparks of light, wavy lines, or blind spots) before the headache occurs?
- Do you have any nasal symptoms or congestion with your headaches?
- Do you have a family history of headaches? If so, what kind?