



## When should I consider taking preventive treatments for migraine?

If you suffer from migraine headache on more than 4 days a month it may also be helpful to also take a preventive treatment each day, as well as the acute treatments you take when you get an attack

This approach may reduce the risk of getting medication overuse headache from taking too many of the “acute” attack treatments

Preventive tablets are medicines prescribed by your doctor or nurse.

Unlike the acute attack treatments these can be taken every day as they do not cause medication overuse headache

There are a number of preventative treatments. Examples include amitriptiline, propranolol, topiramate, candesartan and botulinum toxin and some of the newer treatments that work on the chemical CGRP

We have produced information sheets to tell you more about most of the recommended preventive treatments.

They are available from this site.

We would recommend you read them if you would like to know more, particularly if your clinician has suggested that preventative treatments might be an option for you.

## **What are the principles of using preventive treatments in migraine?**

Preventive treatment should be considered if you have 4 or more migraine days a month as this frequency is associated with significant disability

Remember that using acute treatments on more than 2 days per week is associated with medication overuse headaches.

As there are relatively few head to head comparative studies, the choice of preventive treatment depends primarily upon the side-effect profile of the drug and whether you have other health conditions which might affect the selection

Preventive medications must be increased slowly to an effective or maximum tolerable dose and continued for at least 6-8 weeks to adequately assess effect.

A headache diary may help evaluate response to treatment.

Consider gradual withdrawal after 6-12 months of effective preventive.

You can read more about different preventatives by looking at our other information sheets