

[Open Peer Review on Qeios](#)

Migraine

National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS)

Source

National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS). [Migraine Information Page](#).

The pain of a migraine headache is often described as an intense pulsing or throbbing pain in one area of the head. However, it is much more; the International Headache Society diagnoses a migraine by its pain and number of attacks (at least 5, lasting 4-72 hours if untreated), and additional symptoms including nausea and/or vomiting, or sensitivity to both light and sound. Migraine is three times more common in women than in men and affects more than 10 percent of people worldwide. Roughly one-third of affected individuals can predict the onset of a migraine because it is preceded by an "aura," visual disturbances that appear as flashing lights, zig-zag lines or a temporary loss of vision. People with migraine tend to have recurring attacks triggered by a number of different factors, including stress, anxiety, hormonal changes, bright or flashing lights, lack of food or sleep, and dietary substances. Migraine in some women may relate to changes in hormones and hormonal levels during their menstrual cycle. For many years, scientists believed that migraines were linked to the dilation and constriction of blood vessels in the head. Investigators now believe that migraine has a genetic cause.