

## Community provider guidelines for managing simple headaches

Commonly asked questions	Answers and guidelines
What is the root cause of my migraine symptoms?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Migraine is a complex neurologic disease that has genetic, environmental and lifestyle factors that contribute.</li> </ul>
What non-medicine options do I have to treat migraine?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lifestyle modifications can include getting adequate sleep, avoiding prolonged periods of fasting (don't skip meals), managing stress, exercising regularly, maintaining healthy body weight and nutrition, and avoiding regular caffeine use.</li> </ul>
Do I need an MRI or blood work to diagnose my headache disorder?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Patients do not need an MRI or blood work to diagnose a primary headache disorder such as a migraine or tension type headache.</li> </ul>
How do you know I do not have a brain tumor or aneurysm?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take a detailed history and perform a neurologic examination.</li> <li>Based on well establish data, if there are no "red flags" in your patient's history and the neurologic exam is normal, the chances of your patient having a brain tumor or aneurysm are highly unlikely.</li> </ul>
What can I do about headaches at school?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For headaches at school, it is recommended to have rescue medications available.</li> <li>You can provide a letter for school that will allow your patient accommodations and access to medications as needed during the school day.</li> </ul>

### Worrisome headache red flags (SNOOP):

- **S**ystemic symptoms: fever, hypertension, weight changes or
- **S**econdary headache risk factors: HIV, systemic cancer or recent trauma
- **N**eurologic symptoms or abnormal signs: confusion, impaired alertness or consciousness
- **O**nset: sudden, abrupt or split-second
- **O**lder or other: new onset at age >50, young age
- **P**revious headache history or headache progression: first headache or different (change in attack frequency, severity or clinical features)