

# Headaches

## What are Headaches?

There are four types of headache: vascular, muscle contraction (tension), traction, and inflammatory. The most common type of vascular headache is migraine. Migraine headaches are usually characterized by severe pain on one or both sides of the head, an upset stomach, and, at times, disturbed vision. Women are more likely than men to have migraine headaches.

After migraine, the most common type of vascular headache is the toxic headache produced by fever. Other kinds of vascular headaches include "cluster" headaches, which cause repeated episodes of intense pain, and headaches resulting from high blood pressure. Muscle contraction headaches appear to involve the tightening or tensing of facial and neck muscles. Traction and inflammatory headaches are symptoms of other disorders, ranging from stroke to sinus infection.

Like other types of pain, headaches can serve as warning signals of more serious disorders. This is particularly true for headaches caused by inflammation, including those related to meningitis, as well as, those resulting from diseases of the sinuses, spine, neck, ears and teeth.