

# Therapeutic Self-Care and Migraine

Factors like stiffness and tightness can contribute to headache and migraine. Physical therapy exercises are proven to help.

## Why

Emotional stress, physical tension in our bodies, and headache and migraine are all tied together. For many people, stiffness, tightness and weakness in the structures connected to the spine — like the neck and shoulders — contribute to migraine. Addressing these issues before they become problematic can mean fewer headache days for you.

## What

Physical therapy techniques can help by normalizing muscles and tissues in the areas in which stress and tension can contribute to migraine attacks — with little to no equipment. Things like releasing tender points or “knots,” strengthening the muscles in the neck and shoulders, and having balanced posture can all lead to improved management of headache and migraine.

## How

Your body is made of living tissue that needs to be gradually coaxed into proper balance and form. This process takes time and consistency. Try to implement a self-care technique two to five times per week, until you see improvement. Then maintain some form of therapeutic self-care for prevention's sake.

**More than 50% of people with migraine experience neck pain before and/or during an attack.**

## Take the next step:

Having balanced, comfortable posture can help reduce neck and back tension that can contribute to headache and migraine attacks. Try this exercise at least 3 times this week.

Begin in a comfortable chair, in a seated position with a slumped posture (head down, shoulders forward, back curved).

Gently straighten up, lifting your head and positioning your gaze forward. Overcorrect by rolling your shoulders back and hold this position for 2 to 5 seconds.

Then, gently allow your shoulders to relax down, keeping your head up and gaze forward. It can help to have a small rolled towel or pillow supporting your lower back, at your beltline.

Try to maintain this posture while sitting, repeating as often as needed.

For a more in-depth look at safe and effective physical therapy techniques you can do at home to improve your headache and migraine, check out the **Therapeutic Self-Care** section of the Ctrl M Health app. If you don't see any benefit after a few weeks, it might be time to speak with your provider to determine whether to see a physical therapist for a tailored assessment.

There is progress ahead. Sign up for your free 2-week app trial to try these activities and more at [ctrlmhealth.com](https://ctrlmhealth.com).

