Experiencing migraine is painful enough, and talking with your doctor to potentially embark on a treatment journey can be overwhelming. To help make the process easier, we’ve created a guide to help you understand the distinction between headaches and migraine, along with common terms and related conditions.

**MIGRAINE BASICS**

**Migraine**
A prevalent disease characterized by recurrent headaches with a duration of up to 72 hours. These headaches may feature a combination of unilateral or pulsating pain of moderate to severe in intensity. Common symptoms of migraine include throbbing head pain, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, heightened sensitivity to light, sound, touch and smell, and tingling or numbness in the extremities or face.

**Migraine attack**
A headache of moderate to severe pain lasting four or more hours, which may include unusual sensitivity to light, sounds and smells, lightheadedness, nausea and vomiting.

**Aura**
A visual warning sign in about 1/3 of people with migraine that a migraine attack is about to begin. Usually occurring within 30 minutes of an attack, these sensory indicators of migraine may include visual distortions like flashing lights, moving lines or sensory changes.

**Headache Day**
Number of days during a length of time, commonly one month, that are affected by headache for any part or the whole of the day.

**Symptom**
Any subjective evidence of a disease or condition, often indicating the presence of a disorder or illness. Symptoms may vary based on your specific type of migraine. [To learn more, click here.](#)

**Trigger**
An element that can set off a migraine attack. Triggers often include stress, ingredients in food, weather conditions, changes in hormones and sleep patterns. [Learn more about types of triggers that may affect your migraine here.](#)

**TYPES OF MIGRAINE**

**Basilar-type migraine**
A type of migraine characterized by dizziness, pain at the base of the skull, confusion or loss of balance. May also include vision changes, ringing in the ears and vomiting.

**Chronic migraine**
A migraine that occurs 15 or more days per month over a three month period.

**Episodic migraine**
A migraine that occurs up to 14 days per month.
Menstrual migraine
More common in women, this type of headache is associated with changing estrogen levels during menstruation, pregnancy or menopause.

Hemiplegic migraine
A type of migraine that causes temporary paralysis on one side of the body and may be accompanied by vertigo, stabbing sensation, and problems with vision, speech, and swallowing.

Transformed migraine
A type of migraine that occurs alongside tension headaches, often occurring daily.

HEADACHES AND RELATED CONDITIONS

Acute headaches
A headache that subsides after a short amount of time. Typically associated with an illness like fever, cold or infection.

Aneurysm
A localized enlargement or bulging of an artery caused by the weakening of the artery wall that may rupture. The resulting hemorrhage causes a severe headache. These can sometimes be fatal.

Arthritis headache
A type of headache that prominently features pain at the back of the head or neck. Caused by inflammation of blood vessels or changes in the bone structure of the neck, these often intensify with movement.

Cluster headache
A type of headache characterized by grouping of headaches occurring several times per day for a period of weeks. Like migraine, they’re considered a vascular type of headache that is generally very intense and severe.

Primary headaches
A class of headaches that is not caused by another medical condition. Migraine, tension and cluster headaches are common examples.

Rebound headache
A headache caused by over-use of medications for headache pain.

Secondary headache
A headache resulting from another medical condition, such as sinus pressure, allergies, head injury or trauma.

Sinus headache
A type of headache known for pronounced and constant pain in the nose, cheekbones or forehead that is caused by symptoms associated with sinusitis: nasal drainage, facial swelling, fever, etc.

Tension-type headache
The most common type of headache among adults, thought to be caused by tightened muscles in the back of the neck or scalp. Tension-type headaches are usually triggered by some type of environmental or internal stress.