



Pediatric & Adult Ear, Nose & Throat
Otolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery

VESTIBULAR MIGRAINE DIET

Individuals with vestibular migraine may be consuming foods that trigger their symptoms. Often, these foods affect the blood vessels in the brain or affect chemicals called neurotransmitters that neurons use to communicate with each other. Sometimes these sensitivities can be difficult to detect because they can take from **30 minutes to 3 days** to manifest themselves.

Caffeine: Causes constriction of blood vessels in the brain. This can lead to rebound headaches. Caffeine-withdrawal symptoms can reduce efficacy of migraine medications.

Coffee (100mg/cup), Decaf (4mg/cup), Tea (40mg/cup), Coca-Cola (34mg/can)

Chocolate: Contains 10mg caffeine/oz and has other migraine-triggering chemicals. White chocolate without cocoa is safe.

MSG: Hidden under multiple names such as hydrolyzed protein, yeast extract, natural flavorings, textured protein, whey protein, malt extract, maltodextrin, carrageenan, kombu, sodium or calcium caseinate, glutamic acid, gelatin, fermented or cultured items, etc.

Artificial Sweeteners: aka Nutrasweet (aspartame) or Splenda; stevia is okay.

Alcohol: Red wine is the most likely trigger and vodka is the least likely.

Foods High in Tyramine: Tyramine is produced in food from the natural breakdown of the amino acid tyrosine. Levels increase when foods are **aged, fermented, or are not fresh.**

1. **Processed meats and fish:** Aged, dried, fermented, salted, smoked – or preserved with nitrates or nitrites. Examples are hot dogs, sausage, salami, pepperoni, packaged sandwich meats, bacon, caviar, anchovies, etc.
2. **Nuts:** Avoid all kinds including walnuts, pecans, almonds, and peanut butter. Seeds are okay.
3. **Dairy:** Avoid aged cheeses such as Colby, Roquefort, Brie, Gruyere, Cheddar, Bleu, Mozzarella, Parmesan, Boursalt, Romano, Provolone. Limit yogurt, buttermilk and sour cream to ½ cup per day.
4. **Vegetables:** Avoid onions, sauerkraut, snow peas, pickles, olives and certain beans (broad, lima, fava, navy, and lentils.)
5. **Fruits:** Avoid bananas, avocados (guacamole), figs, raisins, dried fruit, papaya, passion fruit, red plums, raspberries. Limit citrus fruits to ½ cup per day: orange, grapefruit, tangerine, pineapple, lemon and lime

The above list of foods is drawn from various sources including the National Headache Foundation website <http://www.headaches.org/content/headache-sufferers-diet>, *Heal Your Headache* by David Buchholz, MD, and from Dr. Timothy Hain's website <http://www.dizziness-and-balance.com/disorders/central/migraine/>