2021 INTERVIEW SUMMARY SHEET

**Topic**
How Weight Affects Migraine Disease

**Speaker**
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**Title & Organization**
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**KEY TAKEAWAYS**

- Several studies indicate that weight gain and obesity are likely to be tied to migraine.
- The benefits of exercise for individuals who experience migraine far exceed the risks.
- Individuals who exercise regularly have lower levels of stress, which is a trigger for migraine attacks. Regular exercise leads to better sleep, which is also a benefit for people with migraine.
- Yoga, and particularly hatha yoga, might be particularly efficacious for somebody with migraine because it actually works on some of the mechanisms that we see in those who experience migraines — such as neck pain and stiffness, anxiety, and catastrophizing about pain — and also reduces stress.
- A healthy diet and exercise should be lifelong habits, not a phase.

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**QUOTES**

“I would strongly advocate for a healthy, varied diet, one that is more mainstream — for example, the Mediterranean diet — versus any sort of fad diet or taking a weight loss supplement for which we don’t know the health effects, particularly in somebody who has migraine.”

“I think that in terms of aerobic exercise, we would generally tell our patients to start with walking — it’s easy, it’s safe, it’s cheap, it’s practical — and to do that regularly ... But you get a bigger bang for your buck if you combine exercise and dietary modification.”

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**PRACTICAL STEPS**

- Make dietary changes gradually rather than all at once, because some individuals might have dietary triggers that they may not even be aware of.
- Choose a healthy, varied diet that is more mainstream — for example, the Mediterranean diet — versus any sort of fad diet or taking a weight loss supplement for which the health effects are unknown, particularly in an individual who has migraine disease.
- Try different forms of exercise to see what works for you.
- Don’t neglect your sleep. Look at your whole 24 hours and think about your health on the 24-hour clock, not just when you’re awake.

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**TREATMENTS CITED**

- Bariatric surgery
- Exercise
- Hatha yoga
- Mediterranean diet
- Weight loss