KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Exercise is a valuable tool for treating migraine and headache disorders, and many other comorbidities.
- Migraine triggered by exercise is rare, but there is a type of headache called benign exertional headache, which is a nonmigraine headache triggered by exertion.
- Exercise is not a one-size-fits-all solution to treating migraine. Age, familiarity with exercise tools and techniques, and overall well-being are some things that should be taken into consideration when making a workout plan.
- Pushing through pain is not necessary or recommended when it comes to migraine and headache disorders and exercise.
- Though exercise itself is not always a migraine trigger, being mindful of the ways exercise can contribute to other migraine triggers is important.

QUOTES

- “The pace that really matters, particularly for people with migraine, is how you pace yourself over the years and over the decades. And what you want to do is invest in your health, invest in improving your ability to manage your own migraine.”
- “There are a number of randomized trials where people with migraine are put into one of two arms: In one arm, there’s regular exercise; in the other arm, there is not regular exercise. And when you compare over time, people ... who exercise regularly with those who don't, there's regular improvement in headache.”
- “Exercise, in many ways, is a natural migraine preventive and also reduces the frequency and severity of migraine.”

PRACTICAL STEPS

- Exercise at a pace that is comfortable for you, working with your body, not against it.
- Be aware of other potential migraine triggers while working out: Staying hydrated, protecting yourself from the sun, and exercising indoors with air conditioning are helpful ways to avoid a migraine attack.
- If exercising for the first time, or after a while, work with your health care providers to create a safe plan that works for you.
- Exercise is not an easy and instant fix, however the hard work put into creating a habit that works for you has many benefits that will help your overall health.

TREATMENTS CITED

Acute medications
Behavioral stress management techniques
Exercise (gentle aerobic exercise)
Hydration (Gatorade)
Indomethacin
Lifestyle modifications
Mindfulness meditation
Physiotherapy (physical therapy)
Preventive medications
Progressive muscle relaxation
Topiramate
Yoga