Migraine Trigger Guide:

Head-Related Triggers

**Explanation**

The head of those with migraine can become a particularly sensitive area. Even long after a migraine attack has passed, for some people it remains sensitized. Even having long, wet hair, hair clips, or wearing a cap or tight glasses can become enough to trigger an attack.

**Trigger causes**

Triggers may include:

- A tight or heavy pair of glasses.
- Heavy or tight hair accessories such as hair clips.
- "Hairdo headaches," for example, a tight ponytail.
- Tight fitting hats or caps.
- Long wet hair.
- Muscle tension, strain or stiffness anywhere on or near the head area.
- Note: Jaw clenching/grinding can cause tension up around the temples. For more information about this trigger see the trigger guide for Jaw.

**How do you know if this is an issue?**

If you notice migraine or headache coinciding with the above triggers.

You may also experience almost immediate relief when removing the trigger item, i.e. your tight fitting hat or hair clip.

**Options to try**

Fortunately most of these triggers, once identified, can be easily avoided. Simply change your hairstyle or find a more comfortable pair of glasses.

Muscle tension is more complex. If this is suspected to be the cause then a physical examination by a trained health professional should be sought.
**Watch-outs**

As mentioned above, most of these triggers are straightforward; muscle tension can be more complicated.

Factors that often play a role in muscle tension/stiffness may be obvious, such as exercise routine and posture. But others are not so obvious, such as unconscious habits and tension in our body (i.e. you may tense your shoulders unknowingly every time you type on your keyboard).

**More reasons to manage this trigger**

Migraine triggers can stack on each other which means that one of these items could be the “straw that breaks the camel’s back.”

Remove unnecessary triggers or stressors and do things that build your migraine threshold and resilience such as:

- healthy eating (avoiding processed foods)
- exercise
- drinking plenty of water
- getting enough rest, relaxation and sleep