

GETTING THE MOST FROM YOUR DOCTOR'S VISIT

Time with your doctor can be brief. So it's a good idea to be prepared. Here's a simple list of questions that can help you make the most of your appointment.

- At what point did you begin having headaches sufficiently bothersome to interfere with your routine daily activities? (For example, was it as a young teenager, during a pregnancy, last summer, or yesterday?)
- How often are you experiencing headaches, and how often are those headaches severe enough to interfere with your routine activities? A simple, straightforward headache diary can be extremely helpful in providing answers. If possible, complete the diary during the month prior to your visit, and bring it with you.
- What is the character of your headaches? (For example, what are the typical duration, quality, and location of pain, and are there associated symptoms, such as nausea, light/sound sensitivity, tearing, or runny nose?)
- Has there been any recent change in the character or frequency of your headaches? And if so, how have they changed?
- What medications have you tried in the past, either to prevent the headaches or to treat them as they occurred? What was your response to those medications?
- What diagnostic testing have you had? (For example, have you had brain computerized tomography or magnetic resonance imaging scans, spinal tap, or brain angiogram?)
- What medicines are you taking now for your headaches? What are the doses, and how often do you take these medicines? Include nonprescription medications obtained over-the-counter.
- What are the major components of your medical history, and what other medications are you taking?

Don't hesitate to ask more questions during your appointment. The more you know, the better prepared you will be to fight your headaches.

To learn more, visit www.americanheadachesociety.org or The National Headache Foundation at www.headaches.org