

# Health Bulletin



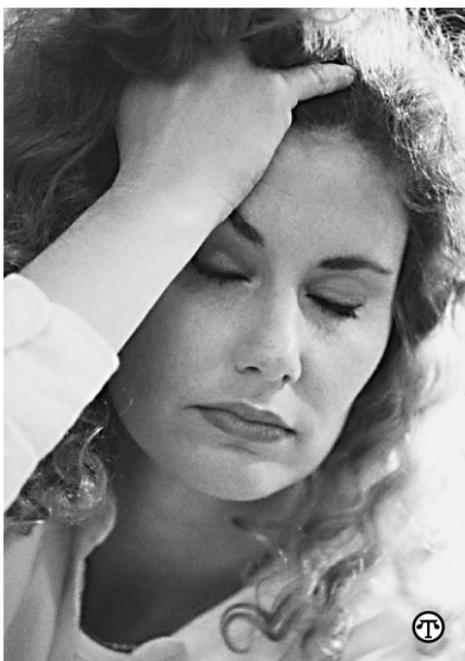
## Coping With Migraine

(NAPSA)—For many women, the days leading up to one's period can be a time of great discomfort. Nausea, backache, and breast tenderness often mark the onset of menstruation. These symptoms are thought to be the result of changing sex hormone levels, a phenomenon that is also believed to contribute to another common female complaint: migraine.

Migraine affects an estimated 28 million Americans, nearly 70 percent of whom are women. Nearly two-thirds of female migraine sufferers experience their attacks just before or during the first few days of menstruation. Although certain foods, beverages, medications and sensory stimuli are thought to trigger migraine attacks, hormonal variations are also believed to play a role.

While migraine can compound the discomfort of menstruation, there are ways to track the pain and effectively manage it before it becomes disabling. The use of a headache calendar can help establish a relationship between migraine and the menstrual cycle and determine if one's headaches are menstrually-related.

Menstrually-related migraine many times can be effectively treated with medication, including prescription medications called "triptans." There are two basic approaches to drug therapy. One approach, acute therapy, can decrease the duration and intensity of an individual attack and the associated symptoms such as nausea and vomiting. The other approach, preventive therapy, is used to reduce the frequency and severity of attacks and should be considered when one experiences three or more attacks a month



that are prolonged and do not respond to acute therapy.

"The class of prescription medications known as the triptans are considered especially useful in menstrually-related migraine because they can be used for both acute and preventive treatment," notes Stephen D. Silberstein, M.D., director of the Jefferson Headache Center and professor of neurology at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital in Philadelphia. "In fact, triptans are the first medications designed specifically to treat migraine headaches."

Women who experience migraine headaches should consult a health professional to develop a migraine management plan. The management plan, based on effective drug therapy to relieve migraine pain, can help women learn to identify and avoid headache triggers. For more information on coping with menstrually-related migraine, visit [www.zomig.com](http://www.zomig.com).