

Carel's Pharmacy & Compounding Center

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MIGRAINE

More than 29.5 million Americans suffer from migraines, with women being affected three times more often than men. This vascular headache is most commonly experienced between the ages of 15 and 55, and 70% to 80% of sufferers have a family history of migraine. Less than half of all migraine sufferers have received a diagnosis of migraine from their healthcare provider. Migraine is often misdiagnosed as sinus headache or tension-type headache.

Many factors can trigger migraine attacks, such as alteration of sleep-wake cycle; missing or delaying a meal; medications that cause a swelling of the blood vessels; daily or near daily use of medications designed for relieving headache attacks; bright lights, sunlight, fluorescent lights, TV and movie viewing; certain foods; and excessive noise. Stress and/or underlying depression are important trigger factors that can be diagnosed and treated adequately.

Migraine characteristics can include:

- Pain typically on one side of the head
- Pain has a pulsating or throbbing quality
- Moderate to intense pain affecting daily activities
- Nausea or vomiting
- Sensitivity to light or sound
- Attacks last four to 72 hours, sometimes longer
- Visual disturbances or aura
- Exertion such as climbing stairs makes headache worse

Approximately one-fifth of migraine sufferers experience aura, the warning associated with migraine, prior to the headache pain. Visual disturbances such as wavy lines, dots or flashing lights and blind spots begin from twenty minutes to one hour before the actual onset of migraine. Some people will have tingling in their arm or face or difficulty speaking. Aura was once thought to be caused by constriction of small arteries supplying specific areas of the brain. Now we know that aura is due to transient changes in the activity of specific nerve cells.

The pain of migraine occurs when excited brain cells trigger the trigeminal nerve to release chemicals that irritate and cause swelling of blood vessels on the surface of the brain. These swollen blood vessels send pain signals to the brainstem, an area of the brain that processes pain information. The pain of migraine is a referred pain that is typically felt around the eye or temple area. Pain can also occur in the face, sinus, jaw or neck area. Once the attack is full-blown, many people will be sensitive to anything touching their head. Activities such as combing their hair or shaving may be painful or unpleasant.

Diagnosis of migraine headache is made by establishing the history of the migraine-related symptoms and other headache characteristics as well as a family history of similar headaches. By definition, the physical examination of a patient with migraine headache in between the attacks of migraine does not reveal any organic causes for the headaches. Tests such as the CT scan and MRI are useful to confirm the lack of organic causes for the headaches. There is currently no test to confirm the diagnosis of migraine.

This month's featured compounds are **Migraine Miracle #1** and **RKC Capsules**.

Migraine Miracle is a compound treatment for migraine headaches. It contains Ketoprofen 4%, Gabapentin 5% and Tetracaine 2% in an anhydrous gel base. Ketoprofen is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory used to treat pain. Gabapentin is used to relieve nerve pain by mimicking GABA, an inhibitory neurotransmitter. Tetracaine is a local anesthetic used to numb the area. Migraine Miracle is used by applying a small amount to facial nerve bundles and massaging in for two to three minutes three to four times daily as needed.

RKC Capsules are a compound treatment for migraine headaches. RKC Capsules contain Riboflavin 200mg, Ketoprofen 75mg and Caffeine 65mg. Riboflavin is a benign B Vitamin that helps to utilize the energy stored in brain cells. Ketoprofen is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medication used to treat the pain. Caffeine helps the body to absorb the medications. RKC Capsules are prescribed two capsules at onset of headache then one capsule twice daily.

If you have any questions regarding these therapies or any other medication related problems, please call our specially trained compounding pharmacist and staff at (580) 355-4540.