



## Hypnosis for Headaches

According to researcher De Benedittis, [90% of headaches are recurrent and benign](#), with no underlying disease, disorder, or structural problem, and they are prevalent throughout our society, causing missed days at work, missed social engagements, loss of earnings, job loss, unwanted job change, as well as other significant issues.

If you are one of the almost [three billion individuals who experience a migraine or tension-type headache](#), you know there is no underlying cause or disease present, then you understand the importance of complementary and alternative therapies that can help alleviate your headache so you can move on with your life. And while there are many headache remedies, hypnosis may be one of the treatment options you're considering for your headaches.

### What is a headache?

According to [Jensen et al.](#), “globally, the percentage of the adult population with an active headache disorder is 47% for headache in general, 10% for migraine, 38% for tension-type headache, and 3% for chronic headache that lasts for more than 15 days per month.”

Further, the number one cause of migraines and tension headaches is psychological stress. And that's where hypnosis comes in. Let's talk about how it works...

### Does it Work?

Yes, [research has demonstrated](#) that participants who received four 1-hour sessions of hypnosis experienced significant reductions in the number of headache days, hours, and intensity of headaches as well as a significant reduction in anxiety levels.

[Another study](#) has shown hypnosis to be effective in “reducing headache pain, usage of pain medication, depression, and state anxiety.”



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Researcher Hammond did a review of the literature on the effectiveness of hypnosis in the treatment of headaches and migraines, concluding that hypnotherapy “meets the clinical psychology research criteria for being a well-established and efficacious treatment and is virtually free of the side effects, risks of adverse reactions, and ongoing expense associated with medication treatments.”

This is great news! As it means that hypnotherapy, especially when taught to the individual in the form of self-hypnosis, has a very low cost in comparison to medication, which virtually no side effects and all the benefits when it comes to headaches and migraines.

## How Many Sessions?

While hypnosis may be used as a stand-alone treatment, research suggests it is far more effective if you learn self-hypnosis and practice daily in addition to receiving regular professional treatments. Once a week professional treatments for a period of three months were found to be effective when utilized with twice daily practice of self-hypnosis.

## Cost

The cost of hypnotherapy sessions vary by geographic area and by practitioner. While hypnosis is a cost-effective treatment option, professional sessions may become expensive. That is why it is advisable to learn and practice daily self-hypnosis in conjunction with your professional hypnotherapy treatments.

Keep in mind that undergoing hypnotherapy treatment may be more expensive than medication initially, with [costs becoming more competitive with medication](#) after about 6 months, and after approximately one year, hypnotherapy is likely to cost less to manage your headache than all but the cheapest of over-the-counter medications.

In addition, some insurance may also cover the cost of hypnosis, such as [Cigna](#) or [Humana](#). While [medicare won't cover the cost of hypnotherapy](#), some [medicare supplemental insurance](#) may, so be sure to ask.

## Frequently asked questions

### **Does hypnotherapy work for headaches and migraines?**

Yes, research suggests that professional hypnosis sessions along with self-hypnosis practice can be very beneficial in reducing headache pain. In addition, those utilizing hypnotherapy may also experience a lessened need for medication for their headaches. Other symptoms associated with anxiety and depression may also be improved through the use of hypnotherapy.

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### **Does Medicare cover hypnotherapy?**

No, Medicare doesn't cover hypnotherapy for headache pain. Some supplemental insurance plans may include hypnotherapy, so be sure to ask.

### **How often should I get hypnotherapy for headaches?**

It is advisable to discuss the frequency of your hypnotherapy treatments with a professional hypnotherapist in your area. A good place to start based on research might be one professional treatment weekly with daily self-hypnosis in the morning and evening.

## **Other Alternatives**

There are many complementary and alternative therapies that may help with headaches and migraines, including:

- Acupressure
- Acupuncture
- Biofeedback
- Chiropractic
- Guided imagery and visualization
- Massage Therapy
- Meditation
- Pilates
- Rolfing
- Yoga
- Yoga Therapy

## **Getting Started**

Before using hypnosis to treat headaches or migraines, it's essential for you to get a proper medical diagnosis. Headaches or migraines with an underlying state of disease can be very serious and should not be ignored. Speak with your physician or medical professional about getting a proper medical diagnosis and what treatment recommendations are appropriate for your condition.

Work with a professional hypnotherapist in your area to determine how hypnotherapy may best help you and the frequency of treatment that's right for you.

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