

# Migraine Headaches

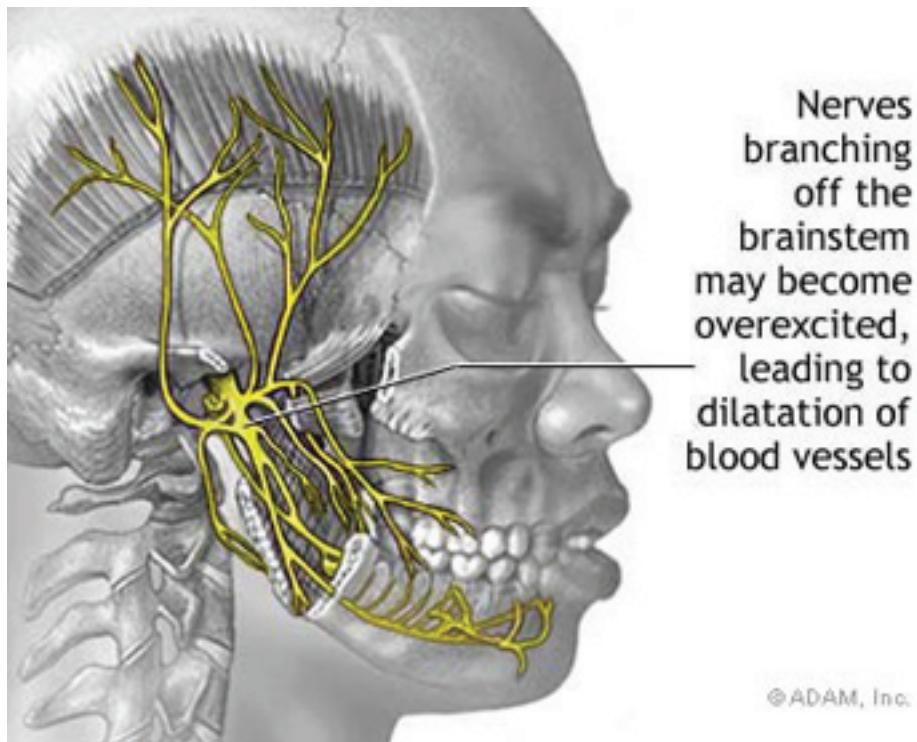
## *What happens during a Migraine*

There are 3 stages of a migraine headache which are caused by changes in the rate of flow of blood inside and outside of the skull/brain.

(Stage 1) At the beginning of a migraine these vessels decrease in size (vasoconstrict), reducing blood flow into the brain. This results in visual changes and flashing lights (aura).

(Stage 2) The body then responds by releasing serotonin and increasing the size of these blood vessels (vasodilate) to increase blood flow. This results in the throbbing sensation and inflammation causing the headache.

(Stage 3) Following the headache there is swelling (odema) and tenderness over the scalp where the headache was.



## *Types of Migraines*

There are two main types of migraine headaches, Classic and Common.

In classic migraines there are visual disturbances and flashing lights in stage 1. In stage 2 there is a headache across half of the head and there may also be nausea, occasional vomiting, vertigo, photo phobia (aversion to light), chills, perspiration which can last for several minutes to hours. Following the headache in stage 3 there is a tight and tender scalp on the side of the attack.

While in the common migraine there aren't usually any visual disturbances during stage 1. Stage 2 is usually longer and more intense than a classic migraine and there is no post headache scalp tenderness.

Triggers for migraine headaches include-hot humid weather, fatigue (lack of sleep), stress, hunger, menstruation, bright lights, food, among others and they very commonly occur upon waking in the morning.

Treatment of migraines is difficult and most treatment options focus on reducing the severity and frequency of attacks and Chiropractic care combined with acupuncture can be very beneficial at doing this.