

Common triggers for light sensitive migraines and tips for managing them

Flicker and glare

Flickering lights can trigger a migraine attack for some individuals. There are ways of reducing the effect through small changes at home and at work:

- Ensure that lighting is adequate and well positioned.
- Fluorescent lighting should be properly maintained to minimise flicker.
- Fluorescent lights should be fitted with the correct type of diffuser to imitate natural daylight as much as possible.
- Avoid reflected glare from shiny/ polished surfaces, plain whitewalls etc, opt for matt finishes and break up surfaces with pictures, posters or plants.
- Fit adjustable blinds to windows.

Dazzle

Some individuals report that their migraine can be instantly triggered by bright colours or patterns, such as stripes or zig-zags, chequered designs, especially on floors (black and white tiled floors seem to be the main culprit). Try to opt for plain, neutral colours where possible to help minimise the risk of more frequent attacks.

VDUs

The increasing use of computers has been found to cause problems for many migraineurs – e.g. time off work or a need to change career. Here are some useful hints and tips:

- Adjust and maintain computer screens to eliminate flicker or glare (e.g. static rather than pulsating cursors).
- Consider a computer with a flat screen.
- Position computer screens to avoid reflection from windows.
- Get a good adjustable chair and find ergonomic designs for your workstation, paying special attention to seating position and posture.
- Ensure your VDU is on a rocksteady surface.
- Set brightness down to the minimum legible level.
- Take regular breaks from the computer. If using a VDU at work, have a look at the Health and Safety Executive Guidance notes for VDUs and discuss with your boss. For further information on Health and Safety, visit **www.hse.gov.uk** or contact the HSE helpline on **0845 345 0055**.

<http://www.headpainrelief.co.uk>

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Migraines could be triggered by eye strain and many employers offer free eye tests for their staff if working with computers forms a significant part of their job. Speak to your HR department about your workplace policy. You can also contact <http://www.migraine.org.uk/>

MigraLens® offers an effective migraine management option for many light sensitive migraineurs to aid visual discomfort during and between attacks.

The lenses absorb the red and blue light from sunlight, artificial lighting, television, computer screens etc. and are available made to your prescription if required. There is a wide range of frame styles or 'clipons' to fit over existing glasses. Some have fixed or detachable side shields for extra protection.

Visit www.migralens.com for more information and to purchase a pair.

For every pair of **MigraLens®** that are purchased, Migraine Action receives a donation.

Please note: **MigraLens®** aren't suitable for driving. Alternatively, some migraineurs may need a more personalised approach; www.s4clp.org is a website that shows all the specialist optometrists that can create personalised coloured lenses to suit your own individual needs.

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