

What does your **health care provider** mean?

When you hear these words, it is important to know what they actually mean.

If you hear...	It really means...
Carbon monoxide	A colorless, odorless and tasteless gas that is harmful to humans and pets. It may be produced by motor vehicles, gasoline-powered tools, cooking equipment or heaters.
Aura	Changes in your vision or hearing that may signal the beginning of a migraine
Menopause	Menopause arrives at the end of a woman's last menstrual period, which means she can no longer have children. In the years before menopause, a woman's ovaries naturally begin to produce less estrogen. As a result, women may skip periods or have heavier or lighter periods than usual.

Remember — if you hear words you do not understand, always ask for an explanation.

Hormones can trigger monthly migraines



Why are migraines more common in women than in men? The answer could be hormones.

The headache–hormone link

Right before a woman's period, her estrogen level drops. This hormonal change can set off migraines in some women. Falling estrogen levels also can cause migraines to be more intense or to last longer than headaches that strike at other times of the month.

Are your headaches from hormones?

Migraines cause intense, throbbing pain, usually on one side of the head. They also may spark an upset stomach and vomiting. Your headaches could be due to shifting hormones if you tend to get migraines a few days before, during, or after your period. Unlike other migraines, hormone-related headaches usually do not cause disturbed vision or auras.

Going against the migraine

Taking an over-the-counter pain reliever such as aspirin or acetaminophen may lift mild to moderate migraine pain. But if this does not help, talk with your health care provider. Together, you can find the best way to treat and prevent your headaches. For example, some prescription medicines may ease the immediate pain of a headache. They also may help prevent headaches.

You also can prevent migraines by finding out if other things are triggering them. Keeping a diary of your headaches can help you track the cause. Possible causes may include:

- Trouble sleeping
- Going too long without eating
- Experiencing stress
- Eating chocolate, nuts, yogurt, aged cheese or foods with the artificial sweetener aspartame

Once you know your migraine triggers, you can avoid them—and head off the headaches.