

Some people find that changes in their routine can trigger a migraine attack. For example, changing sleep patterns, or changes caused by long journeys can precede an attack. Some people complain that they get migraine attacks at the weekend, or when they go on holiday. Weekend or Saturday Migraine is a common term used to describe these attacks.

Without the weekday routine of getting up and going to work, or getting the kids off to school, you may have a lie in, not have your usual morning coffee, eat at different times, or you may go out and do something you wouldn't normally do. Your migraine brain is sensitive to these changes of routine, and the accompanying changes in stress hormone levels. These can trigger the migraine attack.

These attacks don't have to happen only on a Saturday, any change in routine can be a trigger.

## Top tips for preventing Weekend Migraine Attacks

1. Get up at the same time on Saturday as you do Monday – Friday. Go to sleep at the same time too. The migraine brain likes consistency, and oversleeping is as much a trigger as undersleeping.
2. Keep stress levels steady all week. Try to include some work or household tasks as well as time to relax into each day.
3. Consume caffeine like it's medicine. If you drink coffee during the week, make sure to also drink it on the weekends. If you don't feel like coffee on the weekend, you may want to switch it out for another caffeine-containing beverage, e.g., black and green teas also contain caffeine. Doctors recommend no more than 1-2 cups of caffeine a day for people living with migraine. Alternatively, wean yourself off caffeine entirely (which is not easy. You may have several migraine attacks as you do it).
4. Eat breakfast. Skipping or delaying a meal is a well-known trigger. If you eat breakfast at a consistent time on a weekday, do that on the weekend too. Eating more than you usually would at a mealtime can also be a trigger. Remember, consistency is key.
5. Drink more water. Dehydration is often a major factor in weekend migraine, both because you aren't in your normal routine, and many are more physically active on the weekends. Keep the water bottle close, and add in a sports drink, both before and after exercising, to help reduce this trigger.
6. Wear quality sunglasses. If you go outside in the sun, wear sunglasses to diminish the sun glare and block UV rays.
7. Avoid getting hot and sweaty. If you are used to being in an office all day, suddenly running around in the sun can be quite a shock to the system. If this is a trigger for you, consider activities like swimming or yoga, that don't get the heart rate up quite so fast, and indoor activities that allow you to exercise without having to worry about heat, dehydration, and sun glare.

## SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

If your attacks are triggered by relaxing on the weekend, you may find things like meditation or getting a massage may also make you very uncomfortable and potentially trigger an attack. Find ways to reward and pamper yourself that don't involve deep relaxation.

Keeping your routine as consistent as possible, regardless of what day it is, or what else is going on, is key to managing weekend migraine.

## Managing Weekend Migraine

There is nothing wrong with enjoying weekends or holidays! If you are finding your migraine attacks strike just as you start to unwind for the weekend, you may want to consider getting up and having breakfast at your normal weekday time to ensure you start the day right.

Or, if going on a big holiday, you might want to transition or taper your routine into the holiday by allowing yourself to sleep in a little more each day.

If it is relaxing that triggers your migraine attacks, consider some lifestyle changes to relax more during the week, or consider exercising in the morning of your weekends to get the heart rate up in the same way work would. Finding consistency is key.



ELLIE  
WEEKEND MIGRAINE  
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“Without doubt, every Friday I get a migraine attack. It's very annoying and ruins the weekend. Nothing works, I just have to sleep it off.”



This fact sheet was clinically reviewed by Dr Lakshini Gunasekera (BBMed, MD, FRACP)