

RUCHI GURNANI · NUTRITIONIST

7 days to a headache- free afternoon



The 4 pm headache is usually set up hours earlier. One small fix a day for a week: breakfast, lunch, water, chai, screen, sleep and painkillers.

Swipe 👉

Read this first

Keep a small note for these seven days: what time the headache came, when you ate, how much water, how many cups of chai, how long on the screen. The notes will show you which fix matters most for you.

Add one fix a day and keep the earlier ones. By day seven you are doing all seven.

SEE A DOCTOR FIRST IF

The headache is sudden and the worst you have had, comes with fever and a stiff neck, follows a head injury, or comes with vomiting, blurred vision, weakness or trouble speaking. Headaches on most days also need a doctor, not only this guide.

1

BREAKFAST BEFORE TEN

- WHY** Going many hours without food can bring on a headache that eating relieves. Dinner at 9 and nothing till lunch is a long gap.
- OPTION 1** A katori of dahi with a fruit and a few almonds.
- OPTION 2** Poha with peanuts and vegetables.
- OPTION 3** Moong or besan chilla with green chutney.
- OPTION 4** Two eggs with one roti or a slice of toast.

NOT BREAKFAST

Chai and two biscuits. It fills the cup, not the gap.

2

LUNCH ON TIME, AND 4 PM

LUNCH By half past one, even on busy days. Set a phone reminder for 1 pm.

MEETING DAYS Keep one of these in the bag: a fruit, roasted chana or makhana, a small pack of peanuts, a sandwich from home.

4 PM A fruit with a handful of nuts, or a glass of chaas, or a bowl of sprouts. Eat before the headache, not after it starts.

SKIP Samosa and chai as the 4 pm fix. It fills you, then you are hungry and heavy again by six.

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3

WATER THROUGH THE DAY

- WAKE UP** One glass before the first chai.
- AT THE DESK** One glass every hour. Keep a one-litre bottle on the desk where you can see it. Finish it by lunch, refill it for the afternoon.
- THE SIGN** Pale yellow urine means you are drinking enough. Dark yellow means drink more.
- ALSO COUNTS** Chaas, nimbu pani, coconut water, dal and soup. Cold drinks and extra chai do not replace water.

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4

CHAI AND COFFEE

SAME EVERY DAY

Drink the same number of cups every day, weekends too. When your usual caffeine is suddenly missed, a headache can follow within a day.

CUTTING DOWN

Drop one cup every few days, not all at once. A withdrawal headache usually settles within a week.

LAST CUP

By 3 pm, so it does not steal your sleep.

NOT A MEAL

Chai instead of lunch is two headache triggers in one cup: an empty stomach and a caffeine swing.

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5

SCREEN AND POSTURE

- EYES** Every twenty minutes, look at something far away, out of a window, for twenty seconds.
- LAPTOP** Top of the screen at eye level. Two thick books under the laptop and a separate keyboard if you can.
- NECK** Once an hour, stand up, roll the shoulders back, look up at the ceiling for a few seconds.
- GLASSES** Headaches after reading or screen work? Get your eyes tested. Old glasses are a common, easy fix.

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EVENING AND SLEEP

SAME TIME Same bedtime and wake time, weekends too. Sleeping much longer than usual on Sunday can bring its own headache.

DINNER Light and a few hours before bed. Then breakfast is not a struggle next morning.

ALCOHOL A common trigger. Notice if the next day's headache follows a drink.

SCREENS Phone down half an hour before sleep. Tired eyes and short sleep both feed tomorrow's headache.

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7

THE PAINKILLER DIARY

MARK IT Put a tick on the calendar every day you take a painkiller for a headache.

THE LINE More than two days a week, week after week? Painkillers taken that often can themselves cause daily headaches. Show the calendar to your doctor.

DO NOT Stop any medicine your doctor gave you without asking first.

WOMEN Headaches around your period or during menopause? Note the dates too. It helps your doctor.

FOR LIFE

Breakfast before ten, lunch by half past one, water every hour, the same chai daily, a screen break every twenty minutes. Fix the morning. The afternoon follows.

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