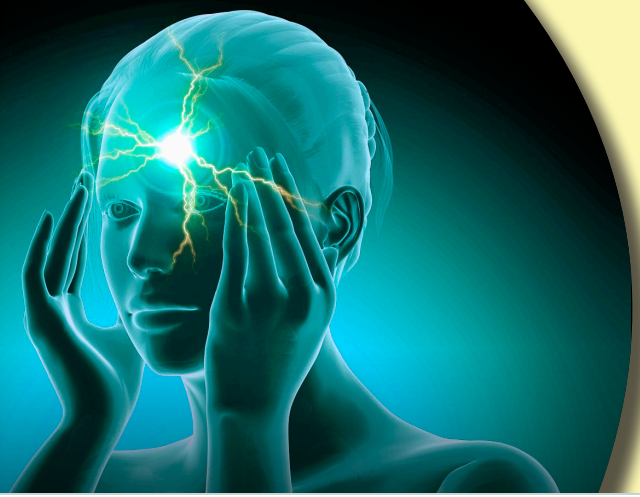
Is the **Migraine Patch** Right for You?



Migraine headaches are a serious and disabling problem for many people. Fortunately, a variety of treatments—with a number of ways to take them—are now available.

What kinds of medications are available for migraine attacks?

Many migraine medications are available. They can be taken many different ways—by mouth, through the nose, by inhalation, by injection, or through the skin.

Some commonly used medicines and their administration methods include:

MEDICATION	DELIVERY SYSTEM
Acetaminophen	Oral
Ergots	Oral, nose spray, injection, or inhalation
Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatories	Oral or injection
Triptans	Oral, injection, nose spray, or skin patch (transdermal)

Why are there so many ways of taking these medications?

Apart from painful headaches, people with migraine often have other symptoms. For instance, many have a condition called gastroparesis, which slows down the gastrointestinal (GI) tract. This affects how fast drugs taken by mouth can enter the blood and start working. Many patients also have nausea with their migraines, and oral medicines can be difficult to take or may not stay down long enough to work.

For people who have trouble with oral medications, non-oral forms, like nose sprays, injections, or a skin patch (transdermal), are available. Each type of delivery system has its own set of pros and cons.

How do I choose a medication?

The choice will depend on many factors, such as your type of migraine, other illnesses you may have, and your personal preferences. You and your doctor can talk about your needs and choose the best type of treatment for you.

Pros and Cons of Different Ways to Take Migraine Medicine

	PROS	CONS
By mouth: regular oral tablets	Convenient	Gastroparesis, nausea, and vomiting during a migraine might make it hard to keep a pill down
By mouth: rapid-release tablets and dissolvable liquids	Starts working faster than regular tablets; convenient	Nausea and vomiting during a migraine might make it hard to keep a pill down
Nose spray	Starts working quickly; avoids GI tract	It can have a bitter taste and irritate the nose lining
Skin patch (transdermal)	Starts working quickly; avoids GI tract; keeps steady levels of drug in blood	New/unfamiliar delivery system; may irritate the skin
Needle (injection)	Starts working quickly; can be used with nausea and vomiting	Can be painful where the needle is injected; inconvenient
By breathing it in (inhalation)	Starts working quickly; easy to use	Can irritate the lungs and throat

What should I know about the transdermal migraine patch, the newest delivery system?

The patch is a battery-powered device that sends medication through the skin. You use it once and then throw it away. It looks like a large band-aid that is worn on the upper arm or thigh for 4 hours. Because the patch is placed on the skin, the drug does not go into the GI tract. This fact is important for patients who have GI problems, such as gastroparesis or nausea, along with their migraines.

How does the patch work?

The patch uses a low-level electrical current to send the medicine through the skin. The patch has two "wells": one holds the migraine medicine, and the other holds a salt solution. The low-level electrical current makes the drug move across the skin and into the blood. (See the illustration below.)

Is the migraine patch right for me?

The patch may be a good choice if you:

- Have not gotten migraine relief with pills
- Had a poor response to oral migraine drugs
- Have nausea and/or vomiting that gets worse when you take your current medicine
- Are afraid that drinking liquids to take oral medicine will make you vomit
- Often wait longer than you should to take your current medicine by mouth, nose, or needle
- Are worried about side effects with other medicines
- Are afraid of needle pain

You should not use the migraine patch if you have:

- Heart problems
- Had a stroke or have problems with your blood circulation
- Narrowing of the blood vessels in your legs, arms, stomach, or kidney
- Uncontrolled high blood pressure
- Severe liver problems
- An allergy to medications in the patch

Ask your doctor about any other possible reasons for using or not using the patch to help treat your migraines.

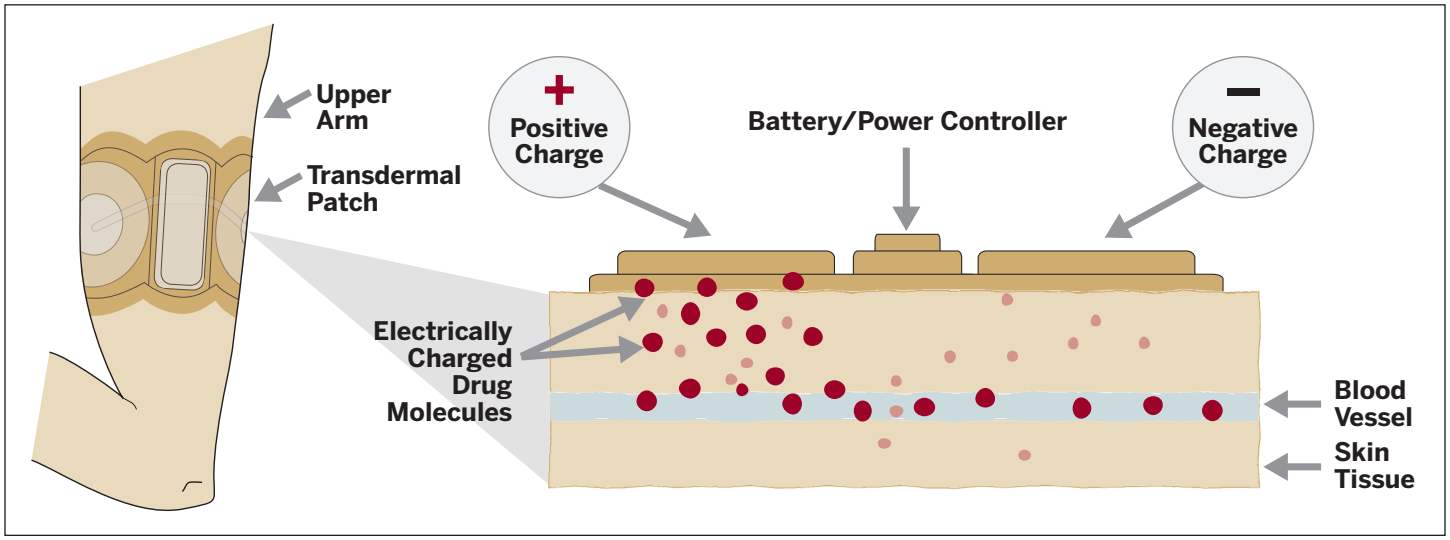
How do I apply the transdermal patch?

The patch should be placed on your upper arm or thigh. You can ask your doctor for step-by-step instructions.

What side effects might I have with the patch?

The most common side effects are pain, tingling,

The Parts of a Transdermal Patch



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itching, warmth, discomfort, or a change in skin color where the patch is put on the skin.

Most people have some redness after taking the patch off, but this usually goes away in 24 hours. Tell your doctor if you have any side effects that bother you or do not go away.

Are there times when I should not wear the patch?

Yes; **do not** wear the patch when:

- Bathing, showering, or swimming
- Having magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)
- Driving or using machinery (this is in case you have any dizziness, weakness, or drowsiness while using the patch)

How can I learn more about migraines and treatments?

The following groups are good sources of information:

- American Headache and Migraine Association (https://ahma.memberclicks.net)
- American Headache Society (www.americanheadachesociety.org)
- American Headache Society® Committee for Headache Education (www.achenet.org)
- American Migraine Foundation (www.americanmigrainefoundation.org)
- National Headache Foundation (www.headaches.org)

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