

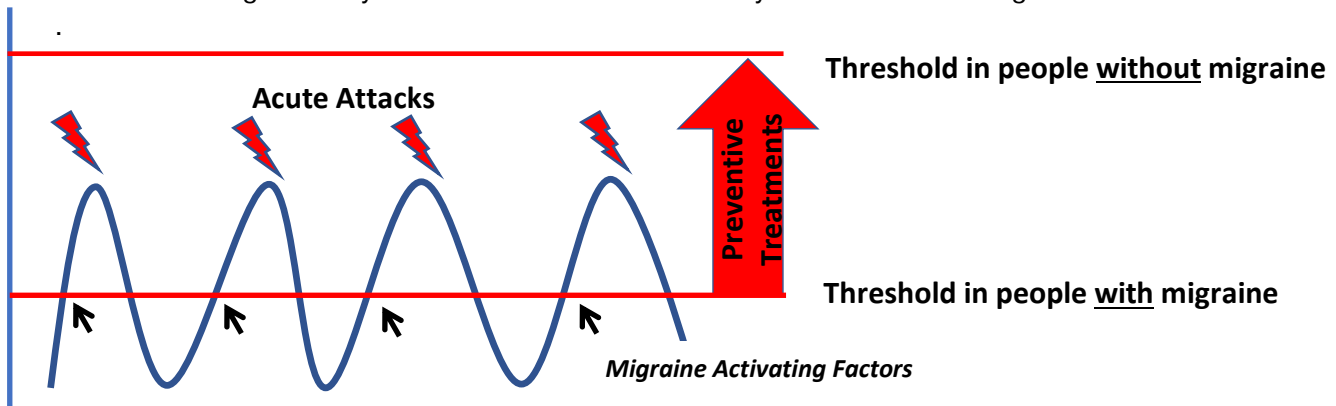
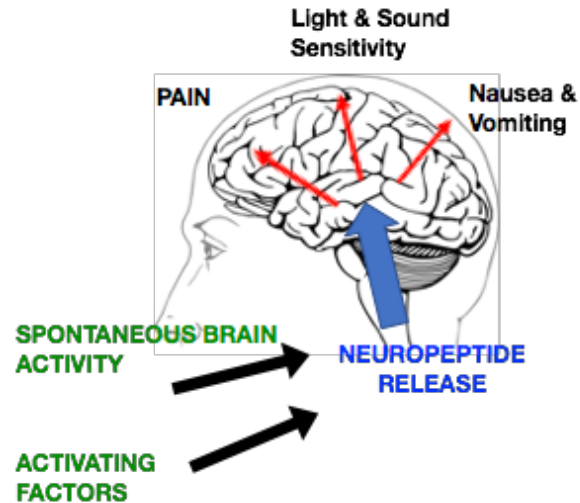
## MIGRAINE INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

### What is Migraine?

- Migraine is a **complex genetic disorder** of the brain.
- Migraine is diagnosed by taking a careful headache history and performing a neurologic examination.
- Migraine can cause symptoms such as: throbbing head pain, nausea, vomiting and sensitivity to bright lights and loud noises.
- During a migraine, **neuropeptides** (brain & nerve chemicals) are released, causing the brain to experience the symptoms listed above.

### The “Migraine threshold”:

- Migraineurs have an **increased likelihood** of releasing these neuropeptides, leading to a **“lower threshold”** for symptoms
- This threshold is dynamic, and your brain can be more or less susceptible to migraine at different times.
- Things that can make your brain **more susceptible** to migraine include various “activating factors”. Examples are: having just completed something stressful, hormonal changes (including menstruation), poor sleep, dehydration, skipped meals, inconsistent exercise, and irregular caffeine use. Migraine may also occur in the absence of any identifiable activating factor.



### RAISE your threshold and have fewer migraine attacks:

- The most important thing in migraine treatment is **REGULARITY**. This means regular sleep, meals, exercise, stress regulation, and hydration.
- Stress can make coping with migraine more difficult. Learning stress management techniques can be an important part of treatment (For example: relaxation strategies, cognitive behavioral therapy).
- You can also raise your migraine threshold with **PREVENTIVE TREATMENTS**. These take time to work. It may take up to ~2-3 months of consistent treatment to see a change.

### How to treat the ACUTE attacks or Worsening of Pain:

- When a headache spike occurs, manage it with **COPING** techniques & **ACUTE TREATMENTS**.
- Treating attacks early and effectively may lead to better control of headaches in the long term. Be careful not to use too many medications per week (ask your doctor) because, depending on the type, this may worsen headaches.