Parenting Can Be a Headache; It’s Worse With a Migraine

by AMY MANLEY

Parenting With Migraines

Migraines can be difficult to deal with, and even more so when you’re early into parenting. Conversely the stresses related to early parenting are difficult on their own, but parenting with migraines can make things even harder; and the late nights and reduced sleep can make the migraine that much more awful to deal with. Thankfully, there are some great tips you can use to make coping with migraines during early pregnancy easier on you.

If you suffer from migraines, early parenting can become laborious. The stress of parenting during the early years can be demanding, but on top of that you’re worrying about when a migraine strikes, and how you will be able to cope with one if it does. Migraines sneak up during the most inconvenient times, and make juggling parenting with a migraine a time for stress overload.

According to Audrey Halpern, MD, a clinical assistant professor of neurology at New York University School of Medicine, it can be difficult to care for your child during a migraine attack. Not only do you suffer from a severe headache, but many people experience vision problems; nausea, vomiting, and noise can also be debilitating during these times. The good news is there are steps you can take to manage your symptoms, and which offer extra help when you need it. The coping steps you create for yourself will make parenting with migraines much easier to manage.

Make a plan

By pre-planning you may be able to reduce both the frequency and intensity of your migraines. A good example of this is skipping meals. When you skip meals, you’re more likely to get an attack, which makes snack preparation an important part of your daily routine. Carrying a snack on hand, along with your medication, will help you remember to take your medication each day while providing your body with the fuel it needs to help prevent migraines.

Identify your triggers

As you know, most migraines are caused by a trigger. Triggers can differ between people, and knowing what triggers a migraine attack for you will help you to avoid them.

An effective way to pinpoint your triggers is to begin tracking your migraines. A migraine calendar can be used for a few months to record when you have a headache. You can include information, such as your level of pain on a scale of 1-10. You’ll also want to include different factors that stand out, such as which medication or food you are prior to the migraine. By adding in details, you’ll see what circumstances cause you to have a migraine, and can then take the proper steps to avoid it.

Some common triggers include:

- Lack of sleep.
- Dehydration.
- Stress.
- Weather changes.
- Certain lighting.
- Foods.
- Alcohol.

Have some quiet time

As a new parent, it can be difficult to get quiet time during an attack. However, there are some steps you can take to eliminate the amount of activity occurring during an attack. Relocating to a darker area, such as indoors with low-lighting, is an effective step towards getting rid of a migraine. A playground, in the sun, with loud screaming children isn't going to help. Some migraines are aggravated by light and noise, so both should be reduced as much as possible once a migraine strikes. By spending some time in a quiet location with dim lighting, you can begin ridding yourself of the migraine.

If possible, ask your partner to help out early into the attack. Finding a location where you can lay down, put some ice on your head and close your eyes for a few minutes will help you get rid of your migraine much faster, and start enjoying the many delights of parenting once again.