Navigating the Dating World With Migraines

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Dating With Migraines

Dating is hard enough for the average person without a chronic illness, so adding migraines to the mix doesn't help. Let’s face it, 'migraine sufferer' isn’t exactly a feature you eagerly list on your Match or Tinder profile.

Living on your own with migraines is difficult in itself, let alone when you throw someone else into the equation that you have to consider. Having migraines adds an extra trickiness to dating that the majority of people don’t necessarily have to think about.

Common date suggestions like going out for dinner or drinks can quickly go from pleasant to a full-blown migraine attack, as certain alcoholic beverages and foods are known migraine triggers (this can also act as the perfect getaway plan if a date goes awry).

Then there’s the issue of canceling plans at the last minute. What if I get a migraine and can’t get out of bed, let alone go out for dinner? What if they think I’m making an excuse and they don’t believe me? What if they’re one of those people who think a migraine is ‘just a headache’?

Meeting People

Getting out of the house to meet potential love interests can be a challenge when you’re in debilitating pain. Instead of giving up on the thought of dating altogether, just try some different avenues. There are plenty of popular online dating sites and apps that cater to your relationship preferences.

Looking for something serious? Consider a dating website that requires a monthly paid membership. Chances are, people who are interested in something serious will be willing to pay to find people looking for the same thing.

If you’re looking for something casual, websites like Plenty of Fish or apps like Tinder are a great place to start. This allows you to make instant connections with your best matches from the comfort of your bed.

If online dating isn’t for you, take advantage of your good days! Again, if you’re looking for something a bit more serious, try meeting people with similar interests by going to places you enjoy – a library, café, or museum. If you’re looking for something a bit more casual, bars are still a great place to go to meet people.

Next page: when to disclose your condition.

When to Disclose

You may not want to list ‘migraines’ along with best features, hobbies, or interests on your online dating profile or have it be the first thing you say when someone at a bar asks you about yourself – after all, migraines don’t

define who you are unless you let them.

So, when should you tell a potential love interest that you're a migraine sufferer and what exactly that means? It really differs for each person. Some people are more private and therefore more comfortable with keeping that information to themselves until they're sure the other person is going to be at least a semi-permanent fixture in their lives.

Other people are far more open and willing to talk about it on the first date. Chances are, unless your date also suffers from migraines, he or she won't have a clue what you're talking about, or at least won't understand the severity of it until they witness it for themselves.

Understand that you may have to educate your date on your illness. Be patient with them – it can be hard to understand things that you haven't experienced for yourself.

If you tell your date and they're cool with some of the things that come along with a migraine (like the fact that you might be tired more often than not, in severe pain a lot of the time, and might have to bail on plans last minute), that's awesome! Not every person will shy away at the thought of a chronic illness.

Putting Your Health First

Putting yourself first when dating doesn't exactly seem like an easy or favourable thing to do. However, when you have migraines, dating, as we've discussed, has its own array of unique challenges and putting your health first is exactly what you should be doing to stay healthy.

Next page: the importance of communication.

Putting Your Health First

- **It's okay to be 'selfish'.** Migraines make you tired, even when you aren't having a migraine attack. So you may be prone to go to bed early, sleep late in the day, and generally not have the energy to go out and be active. That's okay. It's important to take the time for yourself to maintain your health and prevent another attack from happening. You might be concerned about ruining your date's plans, but you have to put your health first and someone worthy of your time should understand that.
- **Be honest.** If you aren't feeling well enough to go out, don't hesitate to cancel just because you are worried about what your date might think. Explain the situation to them and that you aren't feeling up for going out and make alternative arrangements to stay in or reschedule the date altogether. Going out when you aren't feeling your best will likely only cause you to feel even worse.
- **Don't feel guilty.** If you have to cancel plans or your date doesn't understand why you can't make it to their birthday/niece's recital/friend's wedding, don't be hard on yourself. In most situations, you can't control when you have a migraine and anyone who cares about you should want you to rest up and feel better.

Importance of Communication

This brings us to the importance of communication. All relationships – romantic or otherwise – require a healthy amount of communication to survive. When you or someone you're seeing have external factors that can impact you or your relationship, it's important to make those factors known and discuss the challenges surrounding them.

Migraines, for example, might cause you to be tired, so you may not have a lot of energy to go out and do the things your date wants to do. If you've had migraine attack and you need a day to relax and recuperate, take the time you need and be sure to explain the situation to your date to help them understand what you're going through – you know, so they don't think you're blowing them off.

Conclusion

Dating with migraines poses its own unique set of challenges, but that doesn't mean it's impossible. Be open to meeting new people in a variety of ways, put your health first, and don't be afraid to educate your date on your condition.

If they're accepting, you might have a real keeper! If they aren't? Well, who needs that kind of person in their life anyways.