

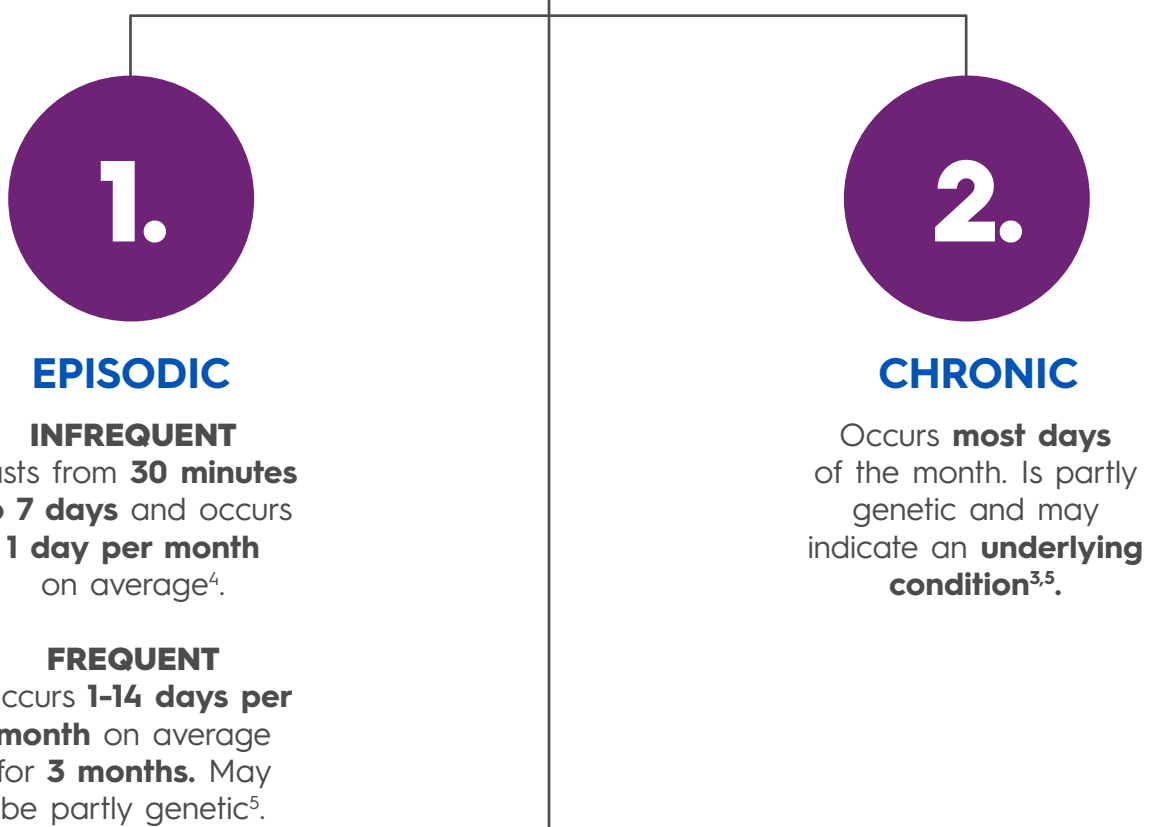
## HOW TO MANAGE TENSION HEADACHE

Do you get recurring headaches that feel like a painful band around your head? They're most likely common **tension-type headaches** (TTHs) that may last from a few minutes to several days<sup>1</sup>.

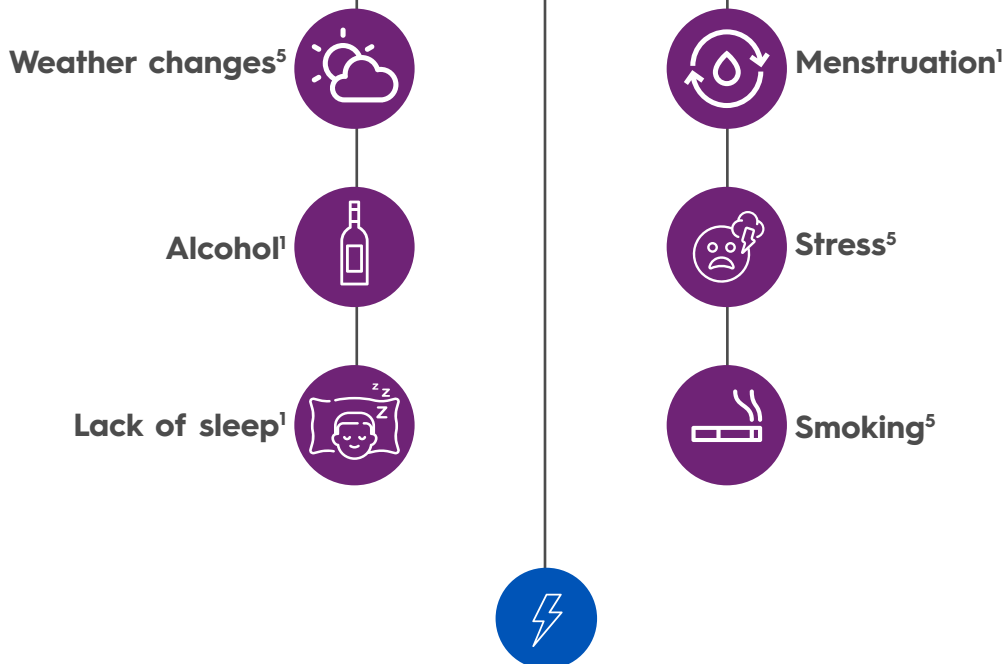
### WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

- Dull, pressing pain – like a tight band around your head<sup>2</sup>.
- Neck muscles at the base of the skull feel tender<sup>2</sup>.**
- Scalp muscles may feel tender<sup>1</sup>.
- Pain slowly increases, then stays constant at mild to moderate level<sup>1</sup>.**
- No throbbing<sup>3</sup>.

### TENSION HEADACHE: TWO MAIN TYPES



### COMMON TRIGGERS



### TREATMENT AND PREVENTION

#### EPISODIC TTH

**Take note of your triggers and avoid them<sup>6</sup>.**

Simple painkillers (aspirin, paracetamol), and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), or medicines containing a combination of these<sup>1,6</sup>.

**Don't overuse pain medication (anti-nausea and some anti-allergy medicines may increase the effects of painkillers)<sup>6</sup>.**

Consult a professional about relaxation therapy and biofeedback<sup>6</sup>.

#### CHRONIC TTH

**Don't overuse pain medication<sup>6</sup>.**

Course(s) of amitriptyline, a tricyclic antidepressant<sup>1,6</sup>.

**Complementary therapies, including: biofeedback, relaxation, self-hypnosis, cognitive therapy, physiotherapy, massage, and acupuncture<sup>2,6</sup>.**

<sup>1</sup> Chowdhury, D. Tension type headache. *Annals of Indian Academy of Neurology*. 15, 1. 83-8. (2012)  
<sup>2</sup> Trkanjec, Z. & Aleksić-Shihabi, A. Glavobolje tenzijskog tipa [Tension-type headaches]. *Acta Med Croatica*. 62, 2. 205-10. (2008)  
<sup>3</sup> Millea, P.J. & Brodie, J.J. Tension-type Headache. *Am Fam Physician*. 66, 5.797-804. (2002)  
<sup>4</sup> IHS Staff. *The International Classification of Headache Disorders, 3rd Edition*. Cephalgia. 38, 1. 1-211. (2018)  
<sup>5</sup> Russell, M.B. Genetics of Tension-type Headache. *J Headache Pain* 8, 71-76. (2007)  
<sup>6</sup> Bendtsen, L. Drug and Nondrug Treatment in Tension-type Headache. *TAND*. 2. 155-61. (2009)

**Suspect you have tension headaches?**  
 Contact your healthcare provider as soon as possible.

Find out more at [www.knowpain.co.za](http://www.knowpain.co.za)

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