

# Migraine Dietary Triggers: Foods/Drinks to Avoid

*from "Heal Your Headache" by David Buchholz, M.D.*

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| CAFFEINE                              | Coffee, tea, iced tea and cola. Even decaf coffee and tea (which contain additional chemical triggers) may be a problem. Also, beware of coffee substitutes. Try caffeine-free herb tea (without citrus and other trigger flavors).   |
| CHOCOLATE                             | White chocolate (no cocoa) is okay; carob is questionable.  |
| MONOSODIUM GLUTAMATE                  | Chinese (and other) restaurant food; soups and bouillons; Accent and seasoned salt; flavored, salty snacks; croutons and bread crumbs; gravies; ready-to-eat meals; cheap buffets; processed meats; veggies burgers; protein concentrates; and low-fat, low-calorie foods. Watch out for hidden MSG.  |
| PROCESSED MEATS AND FISH              | Aged, canned, cured, fermented, marinated, smoked, tenderized- or preserved with nitrites or nitrates. Hot dogs, sausage, salami, pepperoni, bologna (and other lunchmeats with nitrites), liverwurst, beef jerky, certain hams, bacon, pates, smoked or pickled fish, caviar and anchovies. Also, fresh beef liver and chicken livers, and wild game (which contain tyramine). |
| CHEESE AND OTHER DAIRY PRODUCTS       | The more aged, the worse. (Permissible cheeses include cottage cheese, ricotta, cream cheese and good-quality American cheese.) Beware of cheese-containing foods, including pizza. Yogurt (including frozen yogurt), sour cream and buttermilk are also triggers.  |
| NUTS                                  | Avoid all kinds, as well as nut butters. Seeds are okay.  |
| ALCOHOL AND VINEGAR                   | Especially red wine, champagne and dark or heavy drinks. Vodka is best tolerated. Clear (ideally, distilled) vinegar is <i>allowable</i> . Don't overdo condiments (ketchup, mustard and mayonnaise) made with vinegar.   |
| CERTAIN FRUITS AND JUICES             | Citrus fruits (oranges, grapefruits, lemons, limes, tangerines, clementines and pineapples) and their juices--as well as bananas. Also avoid raisins (and other dried fruits if preserved with sulfite), raspberries, red plums, papayas, passion fruit, figs, dates and avocados.  |
| CERTAIN VEGETABLES, ESPECIALLY ONIONS | Onions, sauerkraut, pea pods and certain beans (broad Italian, lima, fava and navy, and lentils). Allowed: leeks, scallions, shallots, spring onions; also garlic.  |
| FRESH YEAST-RISEN BAKED GOODS         | Less than one day old: homemade (or restaurant-baked) breads, especially sourdough, as well as bagels, doughnuts, pizza dough, soft pretzels and coffee cake.   |
| ASPARTAME (NUTRASWEET)                | Saccharin (Sweet'n Low) may also be a trigger for some. Sucralose (Splenda) seems to be well tolerated.   |
| OTHERS?                               | Possibly soy products, especially if cultured (miso), fermented (tempeh) or otherwise highly processed (e.g., soy protein isolate/concentrate). Watch out for soy sauce containing MSG. Less risky are unflavored tofu and soy milk and flour. Soy oil is safe. Possibly tomatoes (and tomato-based sauces), mushrooms...whatever gives <i>you</i> a headache.                  |