

# PainNews

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News from **The Pain Center of Arizona** [www.ThePainCenter.com](http://www.ThePainCenter.com)

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QA  
AND

*with*  
Dr. Kenneth Rabe



# CHRONIC MIGRAINES:

## Types & Symptoms



**P**ain symptoms caused by chronic migraines can feel downright debilitating— best-case scenario, your migraine consists of a slight throbbing pain followed by some irritability and fatigue. Worst-case scenario, your migraine leads to diarrhea, severe nausea, intense pain and auditory and visual distortions.

The highly qualified pain management specialists at The Pain Center of Arizona understand controlling your migraine pain may feel like a daunting task, but the medical team wants to assure you there are treatment options available.

According to the American Migraine Foundation, approximately 36 million Americans suffer from migraine headaches. Furthermore, the World Health Organization (WHO) classifies severe migraines as among the most debilitating illnesses— comparable to dementia, quadriplegia and active psychosis.

With roughly 12 percent of our general population suffering from chronic migraines, research has indicated there are different kinds to be aware of, as outlined below:

### **Ocular Migraine | Migraine with Aura | Migraine without Aura**

**Ocular migraines** are a phenomenon best known for their unconventional visual disturbances. These migraines are painless and can affect one or both eyes; patients have reported small blind spots in their central vision with bright or flashing lights surrounding the spot. The blind spot usually enlarges and creates the sensation of looking through a shattered window.

The occurrence will usually dissipate within 30 minutes.

If your migraine encompasses visual distortions with pain, you're probably experiencing a **migraine with aura**. Migraines with aura produce throbbing pain, followed by tingling in the arms, face or legs, with possible disturbances in a person's hearing, speech and/or ability to smell. According to Everyday Health, 30 percent of those suffering from migraine headaches have migraines with aura.

**Migraines without aura**, also known as the "common" migraine, do not have any kind of visual or auditory disturbances accompanying them and really consist of unilateral, throbbing pain with increased sensitivity to light and sound. These migraines, like the others, could last anywhere from several hours to a few days.

Although the root cause of migraines is unknown, many researchers believe a change in hormone levels, stress, bright lights, smells, medications, alcohol and aspartame could be contributing factors. If you're suffering from chronic migraines due to any condition or injury, find hope at The Pain Center of Arizona with our dedicated team of double board certified pain management physicians.

Our dedicated physicians will work with you to treat your pain, increase your functionality and quality of life, and get you back to living the life you desire. To make an appointment and take the first step toward getting back into life, **call us today at 1-888-PAINCENTER.**

# QA

AND

*with*  
Dr. Kenneth Rabe



**Dr. Kenneth W. Rabe, DO | Tucson Clinic**

Dr. Kenneth W. Rabe received his medical degree from the Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences. He is fellowship trained both in Pain Medicine as well as Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. Dr. Rabe is board certified with the American Board of Independent Medical Examiners and believes strongly in a multidisciplinary approach, utilizing all possible treatment options for patients with acute and chronic pain.

## **Is there a difference between “tingling pain” and a “burning pain” sensation?**

Yes. There are literally millions of nerve endings in your body that are surrounded by an outer sheath of insulation called myelin. When these nerves start to lose this insulation, the signals they are sending are not transferred properly. As this worsens, they lose the ability to transmit this information to your brain and you perceive numbness and tingling. As nerve damage further progresses, the symptoms will continue to change, and you may experience a burning pain as well as a myriad of symptoms including: electrical pain, prickling, crawling, “water trickling down your legs,” and weakness. Your nerve endings are similar to the electrical wires in your house. If you strip the insulation off the wires in your home, the electrical signals will not transfer properly, and you will begin to notice changes in your home utilities.

## **What other health problems can arise from untreated chronic pain?**

Multiple health problems can be a direct or indirect result of untreated pain conditions. Health problems including, but not limited to, fatigue, sleep disturbance, appetite changes, depression, and mood changes often accompany chronic pain. Chronic pain can cause further deconditioning and limit a person’s movements, which can reduce flexibility, strength and stamina. The difficulty to carry out important and enjoyable activities can lead to disability and despair, worsening all of the previously mentioned health conditions. It is imperative that a person suffering from chronic pain seeks treatment to identify and treat the underlying cause of that chronic pain in order to avoid these undesirable outcomes.

## **Will a doctor know how to facilitate drug treatment if I’m already taking medication for an unrelated health problem?**

Your pain specialist is highly trained and can identify the various treatment options available for your extensive pain problems. We fully review and assess the medications you’re taking for your current pain symptoms, as well as the medications you’re taking for unrelated health problems. There are interactions with certain medications that must be avoided, so your physician will discuss this with you if it relates to your situation.

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*Learn more at*  
**[www.thepaincenter.com](http://www.thepaincenter.com)**





# 3

## COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS *about*

## BACK PAIN

1

### Misconception #1

*Exercise will make my back pain worse.*

Athletes with sports-related injuries go through physical therapy to get better, so why can't patients with an injury or chronic pain condition do the same? Contrary to popular belief, exercise does not (usually) make back pain worse—especially when done appropriately. In fact, exercising can provide nutrients to damaged disc spaces and keep tissues healthy and strong. If you're experiencing back pain and would like to get an exercise regimen started, consult your Pain Center of Arizona physician to discuss programs that may be right for you.

2

### Misconception #2

*Back pain is just a common symptom of aging*

One of the most common misconceptions about back pain is that it is a sign of aging. Many things cause lower back pain, and although aging can be a contributing factor, there are occasions where disc herniation, degenerative disc disease, muscle or soft tissue strain, compression fractures, osteoarthritis and/or spinal stenosis are to blame. If your low-back pain is accompanied by fever, chills, leg weakness, weight loss, and severe abdominal pain, you need to see a Pain Center of Arizona physician right away. The pain management specialists will examine your back, listen to your questions and concerns, and determine a proper diagnosis and treatment plan to relieve your chronic back pain symptoms.

3

### Misconception #3

*Rest will make my back pain better.*

Interventional treatments and exercise, as mentioned previously, are two things that can be done to diminish chronic low-back pain. A balanced workout regimen with stretching, strength training and low-impact aerobic conditioning are recommended to aid chronic back pain. Moreover, interventional treatments at The Pain Center of Arizona, like steroidal injections, nerve blocks, radiofrequency neurotomy and minimally invasive procedures, can provide significant back pain relief. Resting frequently may increase your risk of developing or progressing chronic back pain, so try to get moving!