Working with your pharmacist
Your pharmacist is the best person to talk to about all of your migraine medicine management plan; they can offer you the following:

Pharmacists can provide reliable information on all medicines. The pharmacist is an expert on both prescription and over-the-counter medicines. They have a vast amount of knowledge about possible side effects, drug interactions and how to properly use medicines.

Pharmacists can also verify what your doctor has said. It can be difficult in a short appointment slot with your doctor to get all the information you need and be completely clear about how to take your medications. Your pharmacist can verify what your doctor said and answer your questions.

Monitoring any medications that you take is important and by always using the same pharmacy, they can accurately keep a record on your behalf. Some pharmacists ensure that individuals complete patient medication profile too.

Alternatively, you could monitor your own medications by keeping a record of your medicine and allergy history, any medical conditions that need to be considered, and all the medicines (prescriptions and over-the-counter) you take.

The key benefits of your pharmacist or you doing this is that the records will reduce the possibility of taking inappropriate medications and help prevent undesirable drug interactions. Make sure you let your pharmacist know if you are already taking medication or supplements, whether its for migraine or not.
In addition, choose a pharmacy where the pharmacists take time to explain each medicine to you and answer your questions. Some pharmacies have designed a special area where you can privately discuss questions or concerns you have about your medications.

Your pharmacist will be able to provide a number of painkillers, such as paracetamol, aspirin or ibuprofen that can help to relieve a headache and / or migraine. Sumatriptan, a migraine-specific medication, is also available over-the-counter from your pharmacist. There are strict conditions that apply before sumatriptan can be supplied without a prescription and your pharmacist will need to speak with you to ensure that you meet these conditions. If you do not meet these conditions or if your symptoms follow a particular pattern, your pharmacist will advise you to see your doctor.

It is very important that acute treatments, such as painkillers and triptans are not taken regularly in the hope that they will stop migraine from occurring as medication overuse headache could develop as a result. If you are experiencing more than five attacks per month, discuss preventative treatment options with your pharmacist / doctor.

Combinations of some of these painkillers are also available with other medicines that help tackle the symptoms of nausea and vomiting.
The ultimate safety and effectiveness of all medicine rests with the individual. Having good information about your own medicine and taking it as instructed is the best way to avoid problems and receive the greatest benefit.

Medication is not always the solution to every problem. Migraine Action also has a range of information resources about complementary therapies for migraine management. Please visit www.migraine.org.uk/complementary for further information.

If you have been taking a medicine for a long time, ask your pharmacist / doctor to evaluate how well it is working and whether it still needs to be taken or the dosage adjusting. For further information about your migraine medication options, please visit www.migraine.org.uk/acute or www.migraine.org.uk/preventatives.

For further information, advice on migraine management and for updates on the latest migraine research, please contact Migraine Action by calling 08456 011 033, emailing info@migraine.org.uk, or visiting the charity’s website at www.migraine.org.uk. All of our information resources and more are only made possible through donations and by people becoming members of Migraine Action. Visit www.migraine.org.uk/donate to support one of our projects or visit www.migraine.org.uk/join to become a member.

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