

# MIGRAINE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

---

Contact: Mary-lee Cantor 0861 678 911 [info10@headclin.com](mailto:info10@headclin.com)

## **Top aphrodisiacs for the romantic who suffers with migraine**

February is known as the month of love. For many this is the time when you want to enhance the romance but you don't want a spike in the migraine scale. What you need are some aphrodisiacs designed specifically for the romantic who also suffers with migraine. Although science has given very limited credence to the concept of natural aphrodisiacs, over thousands of years certain foods have been used in the real world to add a little extra passion to relationships. Dr Elliot Shevel the Medical Director at The Headache Clinic made a list of items most compatible when one or both sweethearts are migraine sufferers.

### **Carob**

A recent London based study explored the link between chocolate and migraine. The study which was published in Cephalalgia the international journal of headache, found that chocolate triggered migraine in 41% of the subjects. While the carob bars on the other hand did not induce migraine in a single sufferer. Dr. Shevel explains chocolate contains a chemical called phenylethylamine which is thought to cause headache by affecting the arteries that are the source of the pain. Unfortunately phenylethylamine is found in the cocoa bean which is what chocolate is made from. Sad but true! If your partner is a migraine sufferer, carob bars are available from your local health store. Carob is also believed to be an aphrodisiac and is healthier than traditional chocolate and may well increase your chances this Valentine's Day.

### **Bananas**

This classic aphrodisiac can *trigger* migraine in some, but they're also high in magnesium, which is a great migraine-fighter. It might help to make sure the banana you eat is not over-ripe. Bananas are rich in potassium and B vitamins, necessities for sex hormone production. In humans, serotonin levels are affected by diet. An

increase in the ratio of tryptophan to phenylalanine and leucine will increase serotonin levels. Banana's have a good ratio, which means that they are good "Pick-Me-Upper".

## **Honey**

Yes, they call it a *honeymoon* because in medieval times lovers gave each other a drink containing honey. We recently learned it was a great home remedy for headache. Take two teaspoons of honey with each meal. Honey contains potassium and magnesium which will help relax the arteries and allow more blood to flow. This is very good if you feel a headache coming on or have a hangover.

## **Passionflower**

Are you anxious about that romantic evening? Passionflower is a calming herb. Taken as a tea before bed, it can help you sleep. At least one clinical trial has found it to lower anxiety. It is also believed to have anti-inflammatory and pain killing properties. Great for romantic migraine sufferer!

## **Almonds**

Eating almonds (especially raw almonds) can keep that migraine attack away. They're also high in tryptophans. Almonds are also believed to increase passion in females.

## **Ginger**

Ginger is thought to increase desire because of the way it stimulates the circulatory system. It also inhibits a substance called thromboxane A2 that prevents the release of substances that make blood vessels dilate. Use fresh or powdered ginger when you cook, eat crystallized ginger, or put grated fresh ginger in a drink. Ginger is useful for migraines as well as other headaches. It is just the right thing for that romantic stir fry.

## **Ginko biloba**

The leaf of the ginko tree is an extremely popular herb for headache, but the medical evidence is still hotly disputed. Ginko is said to improve the flow of blood and get more oxygen to the brain, hence not only relieving headache but improving memory. Ginko is also said to increase blood flow to improve alertness and get oxygen

to the brain. Be careful of taking ginko with headache medications – check with your doctor! It is a well known aphrodisiac. There are some nice teas sold with Ginko and peppermint, so why not give it a try?

### **Garlic**

The "heat" of garlic is said to increase passion. Needless to say, this is one you'll want to make sure you eat *with* your partner, and not alone. Garlic is a migraine-fighter, possibly because of its blood-thinning properties. An elegant Italian meal with roasted garlic may be just what the doctor ordered.

### **When to consult a medical professional**

If you are unable to manage your headache on your own or the headache persists, it is imperative that you undergo a multidisciplinary investigation to diagnose the specific factors behind the recurring headache. There are a number of healthier treatment options to medication available right here in South Africa. It is possible to get to the bottom of the problem and resolve the pain permanently so that you can enjoy the quality of life you deserve.

For more information please contact [Mary-lee Cantor](mailto:Mary-lee.Cantor@unisa.ac.za) on +2711 484 0933.

ENDS