

# Biofeedback for Migraine and Tension Headaches

Offered by Bend Counseling & Biofeedback | [www.bendcounseling.com](http://www.bendcounseling.com) | 541.550.7940

## Quick Facts...

Over 45 million Americans suffer from chronic migraine or tension headaches.

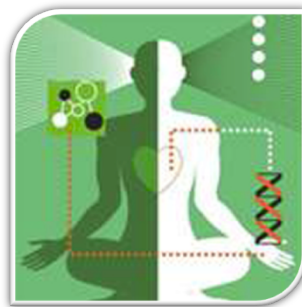
Biofeedback is one of the most widely accepted non-drug techniques for headache control and prevention.

The effectiveness of biofeedback has been demonstrated during 25 years of research with well over 100 investigations.

## What is Biofeedback?

Biofeedback involves using electronic instrumentation to monitor specific, often unconscious physiological activities of a patient's body and then "feeds back" the information to them. Once a patient becomes aware of his or her body's processes, he or she can change those patterns to manage headache onset and symptoms.

Increased muscle tension and changed body temperature are two of the body's responses to stress and strain. Biofeedback provides patients with instant and continuous information on these involuntary and unconscious processes, a patient can modify his or her body's reaction to stress. After a patient has used biofeedback to "train" his or her ability to recognize and reduce body tension, the patient is able to do so anywhere and any time without the help of instrumentation. These skills aid in preventing, reducing or stopping a headache. Biofeedback often enhances the effectiveness of other treatments by making patients more aware of their own role in treatment and prevention.



### What are the benefits?

Biofeedback is effective for chronic problems such as migraine or tension headaches because it reduces pain, long-term medication use, the frequency of emergency room visits, and lost time from work, family and social life. It is safe and noninvasive.

### How long does it take? Is it covered by insurance?

Biofeedback is a short-term intervention with results generally seen from 8 to 12 sessions. Most major insurance companies cover biofeedback for approximately 10 sessions.



## Our Approach

Biofeedback is a multidisciplinary modality. We are specialized in a range of biofeedback techniques to offer each patient individualized treatment:

- Heart Rate Variability Training
- Hand Warming
- Hemoencephalography (HEG)
- Neurofeedback
- Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction

## What Is The Evidence?

Far from a “new age” or experimental intervention, biofeedback has a long and scientifically validated history of effectiveness in treating migraine and tension headaches. Its effectiveness has been demonstrated throughout 25 years of research in over 100 investigations. The American Academy of Neurology endorses biofeedback as one of only a handful of evidence-based behavioral treatments for managing migraine headaches.

### Efficacy Study

A recent meta-analysis examined the effectiveness of biofeedback in 55 studies, including randomized controlled trials and pre-post trials. Medium effect sizes were documented for long- and short-term outcomes of biofeedback in adults. The researchers concluded:

***“Biofeedback significantly and substantially reduces the pain and psychological symptoms of highly chronified patients within the scope of only 11 sessions. Thus, Biofeedback can be recommended as an evidence-based behavioral treatment option for the prevention of migraine” (Nestoriuc & Martin, p. 123).***

Source: Nestoriuc, Yvonne and Martin, Alexandra. “Efficacy of biofeedback for migraine: A meta-analysis.” *Pain* 128 (2007): 111-127.

The average improvement with either biofeedback alone or drugs alone is 55% reduction in migraine. When combined, the average improvement is 70%.

Gay Lipchik, PhD  
American Headache Society

### Who Should Consider Biofeedback?

Biofeedback is an option -either **before** or **with** drug therapy- for headache sufferers who fall into one or more of the following categories:

- Patients who prefer non-drug interventions
- Poor tolerance to specific drugs
- Insufficient or no response to drug therapy
- Pregnancy, planned pregnancy, or nursing
- Other medical contraindications for specific drugs
- History of long-term, frequent, or excessive use of pain medications that can aggravate headache problems (or lead to decreased responsiveness to other drugs)
- Significant stress and/or poor stress-management skills

#### About Bend Counseling & Biofeedback



Bend Counseling & Biofeedback, Inc., was founded by Randy Wild, MS, LPC. Randy is a licensed psychotherapist who focuses on integrated approaches to counseling and wellness.

Randy’s specialized training in biofeedback and neurofeedback allows him to address both the psychological and physiological aspects of each patient. This evidence-based approach results in more consistent symptom reduction for patients than traditional psychotherapy alone. Randy treats individuals with ADHD, depression, anxiety, migraine and tension headaches, and insomnia.