

Egilius Spierings, Headache and Face Pain Specialist, Pushes Back on Recent Study Linking Vomiting to Migraine Relief

Neurologist Says Recent Study Is Being Misinterpreted and Warns Against Viewing Vomiting as a Form of Relief

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, June 17, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A [recent study](#) linking vomiting during migraine attacks to faster pain relief has prompted discussion among physicians and migraine patients. But neurologist and headache specialist [Dr. Egilius Spierings](#) says the findings are being taken too far.

"The message people are hearing is that vomiting helps migraine. That's simply not true," says Dr. Spierings. "Vomiting is a sign that you're very sick. It is not a treatment."



The study found that some patients reported improvement after vomiting, but Dr. Spierings says that does not mean the vomiting itself caused the headache to subside.

"Just because one thing follows another doesn't mean it caused it," he says. "Migraine attacks go through phases, and the pain may have been improving anyway."

According to Dr. Spierings, vomiting only adds to a patient's misery. It can cause dehydration, interfere with medication absorption, and leave patients feeling even worse.

"Vomiting equals sickness," he says. "You don't want a migraine to reach the point where you're throwing up. That's not something to celebrate. That's something to prevent at all costs."

He also believes that many physicians overlook the importance of nausea and vomiting during migraine attacks. They significantly contribute to the disability caused by migraine headaches. These headaches very often do not impact the person's ability to function until he or she becomes nauseated. The act of vomiting, along with the associated straining, makes those headaches worse. The resulting release of stomach distension may ease both the headache and the nausea, but does so only temporarily.

The origin of stomach complaints with migraine headaches is also generally not correctly understood. They are the result of slowed gastric emptying due to the intense pain of the migraine headache stimulating the sympathetic nervous system. I see in the clinic that doctors don't understand this, as they prescribe an anti-nausea medication, like Zofran®, which further slows stomach emptying. This not only makes matters worse, but it also further hampers the absorption of medications to relieve the migraine headache.

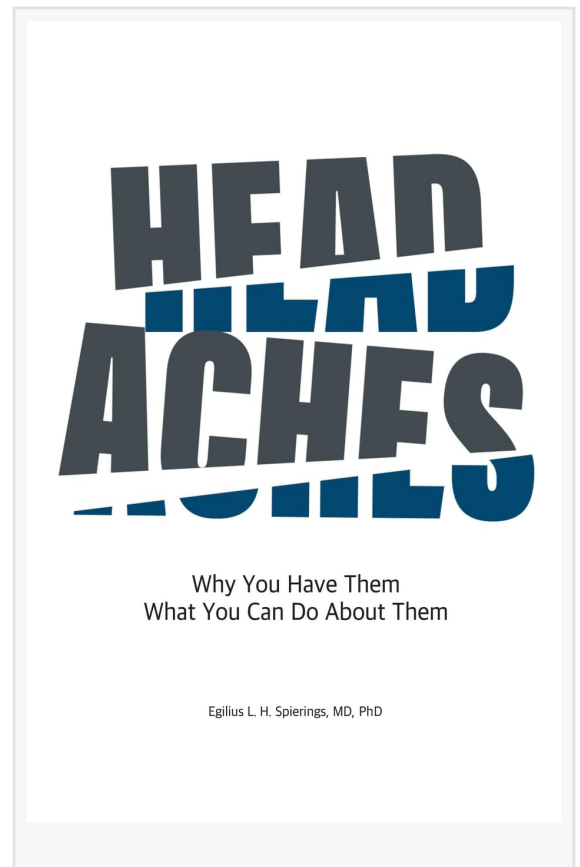
Dr. Spierings notes that vomiting can occasionally have a different effect in very young children, where it may shorten the episode and relieve stomach distress. But he says adults should not view vomiting as beneficial. In fact, he says they should avoid it whenever possible. "It makes the headache more painful and simply makes people feel sicker."

For Dr. Spierings, the greater concern is that study findings can easily be mistaken for medical advice.

"The study was conducted at the Headache Center of the University Hospital of the University of Florence," Dr. Spierings concludes. "This center is one of the oldest headache centers in the world. It was founded in the early 1950s by someone I refer to in my book as a migraine maestro, Professor Federigo Sicuteri. He was at my PhD graduation in 1980 in Rotterdam, The Netherlands. The fact that 77% of their patients experienced vomiting with their migraine attacks means that they are poorly treated. In addition, research findings are not treatment recommendations. People with migraine should seek therapies that stop the headache, not symptoms that make them feel worse."

About Dr. Egilius Spierings

Dr. Egilius Spierings, MD, PhD, is a neurologist, headache and face pain specialist, and pharmacologist with nearly 50 years of clinical experience. A former faculty member at Harvard



Medical School and Tufts University, he is Medical Director of the Greater Boston Headache Center and has authored numerous scientific papers and the book, [Headaches: Why You Have Them – What You Can Do About Them](#). Throughout his career, Dr. Spierings has focused on advancing the understanding and treatment of headache and face pain.

To learn more, click here: <https://www.help4headache.com/about>

Dr. Egilius Spierings is available for interviews.

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