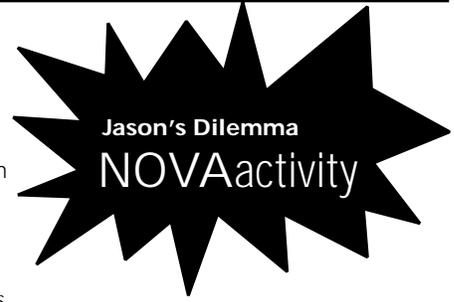


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# Jason's Dilemma

Roughly a tenth of the population suffers from migraine headaches. Jason is a student who suffers from recurrent migraines. When he gets them, he is in so much pain that he can't study or work. He also plays the violin and is scheduled to perform in a recital in less than a month. He is worried that if he gets a migraine, he'll be so incapacitated he won't be able to perform.

You have been assigned to read these selections in the role of someone connected to Jason's case. On the basis of this information, in your chosen role, what questions do you have about each treatment? What additional information do you need in order to make an informed decision?



## Diet

Nutritional awareness is a must for preventing migraines. Food allergies or intolerances are always involved in migraines. Trigger foods include citrus juices, red wine, nitrate additives in foods, chocolate, canned fish, refined sugars, and cultured foods such as yogurt and cheeses.

## Relaxation Techniques

"The tendency to have migraines is a genetic or a biologic condition that can be triggered by certain external events – a certain food, perhaps, or fatigue or a hormonal change. Although we don't know the specific cause of migraines, we do know from controlled studies that regularly practicing relaxation imagery exercises (thinking of some pleasant activity or place) results in fewer migraines than taking conventional medicine for the same purpose. We know this because we have compared a standard treatment for migraine in children with the use of relaxation imagery and other self-regulating strategies. Children trained in self-regulating techniques did far better than the children who were on a placebo, and needed no treatment at all."

(Moyers, Bill. *Healing the Mind*. Interview with Dr. Karne Olness, M.D., pp. 71-72.)

## Medication

"Do not take the prescription drug Fiorinal on a regular basis. Doctors hand it out like candy to migraine sufferers without warning them that it contains an addictive downer (Butalbital, a barbiturate) and caffeine in addition to aspirin."

(Natural Health, *Natural Medicine*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1990, pp. 310-311.)