

Brain Freeze might be the answer to your headache or migraine relief



>

If you've ever had brain freeze you know it. If you haven't then you're in for a big surprise when it happens and it will change the way you think about headaches and migraines.

It's been known for some time that **quickly eating ice cream or quickly drinking a very cold beverage** causes "brain freeze" for some people. Usually this happens when something very cold hits the upper roof of the mouth.

If you've ever experienced this you know that within a few seconds, there is a **sensation of an excruciating pain** shooting right up into your brain. Fortunately, the pain sensation is not long lasting but the sensation can be very unnerving.

The mechanism is simple –

- The sudden cold sensation at the roof of the mouth travels to the sinus area where it constricts the capillaries, as the cold effect passes off the capillaries warm and expand.
- This constriction/expansion effect sends a message to the brain by way of the trigeminal nerve (a facial nerve).
- The brain interprets this signal as coming from the forehead, hence the "brain freeze" effect that feels like an instantaneous headache.

This strange effect has intrigued researchers.

A recent study testing iced water sipped with a straw positioned at the roof of the mouth reveals how the sudden cold effect also causes an

increase in blood flow, possibly a reaction to protect the brain by making sure it stays warm. The increased blood flow expands the anterior cerebral artery, which in turn creates pressure to build up within the brain. It's this **pressure from the sudden change in blood flow** that is creating the headache-like sensation of "brain freeze."

What makes brain freeze so important is that it increases the understanding of the mechanism behind headaches and migraines. Researchers now feel that sudden changes in rapid blood flow maybe what's causing many of the headache sensations, and this could lead to new treatments for headache and migraine relief.

You may want to be more careful about eating that ice cream too fast or gulping down that cold drink. However **if you ever feel that brain freeze" coming on, place your tongue on the roof of your mouth, tilt your head back for 10 seconds or more, or drink something warm.** Any of these techniques will have an immediate effect on reducing your pain.

Source: New Clue to Brain Freeze – Changes in Brain's Blood Flow May Explain Brain Freeze by [Jennifer Warner](#), WebMD Health News, Reviewed by [Louise Chang, MD](#) <http://www.webmd.com/migraines-headaches/news/20120423/new-clue-brain-freeze>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ice-cream_headache