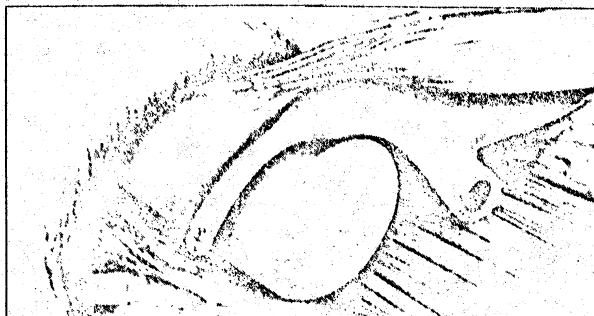
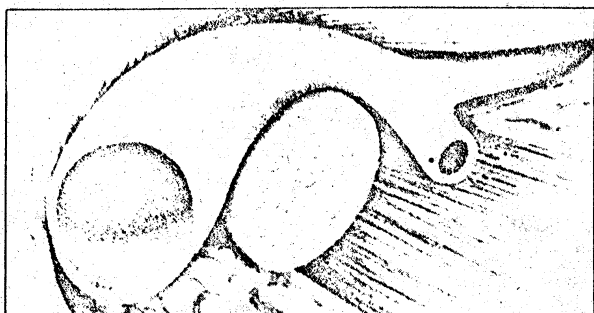


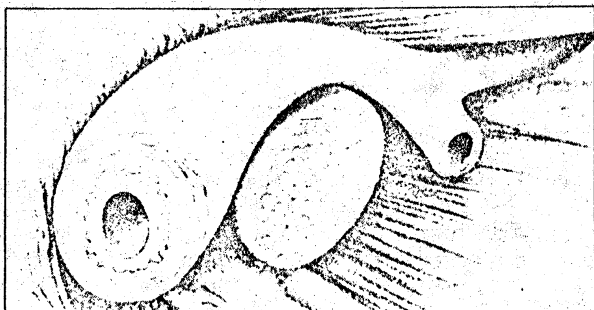
Migraine's three phases



The initial phase is characterized by constriction of the ophthalmic artery, branching from the internal carotid artery and transversing the optic nerve. Resulting ischemia causes central scotoma.



In the second phase, the same artery is dilatated, and the patient experiences a throbbing, pounding headache.



The third phase begins when edema of the ophthalmic artery results in a pounding headache with duller, steadier, more constant pain that's more diffuse in distribution. This phase may not always occur.

phylactically in oral doses of 20 mg four times a day.[§] In my experience, however, it has been effective in only a small percentage of cases.

Since depression may cause frequent, severe migraine headaches, prophylactic antidepressant therapy should also be considered to treat the underlying depression. We use the tricyclics, such as imipramine HCl (Imavate, Janimine, Presamine, SK-Pramine, Tofranil) and amitriptyline HCl (Elavil, Endep) in preference to the monoamine oxidase inhibitors (MAOIs).

CUTLER: Dr. Siller, you've had experience with propranolol in migraine. Does it work well?

SILLER: It's too early to tell whether it's effective. I'd use it only if standard treatments don't bring improvement.

CUTLER: Dr. Aldredge, you said that when a patient can't tolerate ergotamine, you try one of the other agents. What do you mean by "can't tolerate?"

ALDREDGE: Ergotamine is a potent, long-acting vasoconstrictor. Many patients taking it experience not only gastric side effects, such as nausea and vomiting, but also paresthesias, muscle pain, or precordial pain, along with alterations of pulse and blood pressure. These are immediate contraindications to continued use. Another is pregnancy, because the drug's a uterine stimulant. (Isometheptene, however, can be used safely in pregnancy.)

Side effects have also been reported with methysergide. It's been associated with retroperitoneal, pleuropulmonary, and heart-valve fibrosis. In several clinics with large series, it's been found safe when given up to six months, followed by periods of four to six weeks off the medication. Contraindications include peripheral vas-

[§]Use for this indication has not been approved by the FDA.