



2026 INTERVIEW SUMMARY SHEET

SPEAKER

Fred Cohen, MD

TITLE & ORGANIZATION

Asst. Prof. of Medicine and Neurology | Medical Dir. Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai | Headache Intervention

TOPIC

How To Harness the Power of Sleep When You Live With Migraine

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Lack of sleep or changes in sleep patterns can lower the attack threshold due to neuroinflammation caused by a disrupted lymphatic cleansing system.
- Poor sleep is a common trigger that should be addressed through proper sleep hygiene, assessment for underlying sleep disorders like obstructive sleep apnea, and potentially behavioral therapies or medication management.
- Untreated or poorly managed anxiety and depression could manifest as difficulty in falling asleep, fragmented sleep, or oversleeping.

KEY TREATMENTS

- Cognitive behavioral therapy for insomnia (CBT-I)
- Computer (FL-41) glasses
- Melatonin
- Sleep hygiene
- Sleep restriction therapy

NOTABLE QUOTES

“Migraine is multiple different avenues to go down. And that’s why lifestyle modifications are critical.”

“No patient should ever be shrugged [off] or diminished for a complaint they bring up. I would say if that happens, you need to see a new provider.”

PRACTICAL STEPS

- Maintain a headache diary to determine triggers.
- Avoid stimulations of all sorts an hour or two before you go to bed to ensure good sleep hygiene.
- If you are concerned about having sleeping issues, schedule a sleep study.
- Be your own advocate and do your research.
- Do not hesitate to change your provider if you feel dismissed by them.
- Set a consistent wake-up and meal schedule to minimize "surprises" to the nervous system.