



# 2026 INTERVIEW SUMMARY SHEET

## SPEAKER

Paul R. Martin, PhD

## TITLE & ORGANIZATION

Adjunct Professor  
Monash University & Griffith University

## TOPIC

How Behavioral Therapies Help Prevent & Manage Migraine

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) has Grade A evidence behind it that shows a 50% to 77% reduction in headaches.
- CBT often outperforms pharmacological treatments in long-term follow-up cases.
- Behavioral therapies are helpful treatment methods, as they can be used in combination with medication and other treatments.
- The functional model of migraine management is a collaborative approach that moves beyond diagnosis to ask “why” an attack occurs at a specific time, exploring triggers, stress sources, social support, and consequences.
- Continuous avoidance of triggers can lead to sensitization, making a person more reactive to triggers, and sometimes leading to a significantly restricted lifestyle. For some triggers, desensitization and careful exposure may be more helpful.

## KEY TREATMENTS

- Acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT)
- Attention diversion training
- Biofeedback training
- Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT)
- Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT)
- Progressive relaxation training
- Relapse prevention training
- Relaxation training
- Social support
- Trigger management (avoidance and exposure)

## NOTABLE QUOTES

*“Hypervigilance implies that you're tense, that you're looking for triggers, and looking for things that could bring on a migraine ... that puts you in a biological state where it's more likely that a migraine will come on.”*

*“When they first did the global burden of disease study in 1990, migraine wasn't considered ... It wasn't until 2000 that it came in, but having come in, it's now ranked as the second-highest cause of disability worldwide ... the world is more and more coming to recognize it. It's a very significant, serious problem that is going to be taken very seriously.”*

## PRACTICAL STEPS

- If you haven't considered behavioral therapies before, speak with your healthcare provider about layering them in to your treatment plan.
- Seek out clinical psychologists who are trained in and practice behavioral therapies including CBT, relaxation training, and biofeedback.
- Consider your triggers and whether strict avoidance makes sense or if you can consider desensitization through gradual exposure.
- Build a network of social support and find ways to manage stress, as lifestyle can be a major contributing factor in migraine.