

# MEDI-DAITH FOR MIGRAINE HEADACHES

IS IT THE RIGHT TREATMENT FOR ME?  
YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED



MORE INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE AT:

**[WWW.BLUEBANANA.COM/MIGRAINES](http://WWW.BLUEBANANA.COM/MIGRAINES)**  
**[WWW.LONDON-MIGRAINE-CLINIC.CO.UK](http://WWW.LONDON-MIGRAINE-CLINIC.CO.UK)**



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# MEDI-DAITH PIERCING FOR MIGRAINE HEADACHES

## ***What?*** The new Medi-Daith for migraine headaches!

This is an enhanced daith piercing procedure that helps the piercer locate the best piercing location on the daith. A correct placement can help to reduce the effect of migraine headaches.

## ***Why?*** Trying our new piercing could reduce migraine headache effects.

Our specialist piercing procedure has been developed through the work of the London Migraine Clinic. During your visit, you can also opt to take part in an LMC-led study to further investigate the effectiveness of this Medi-Daith piercing.

## ***Where?*** In A Blue Banana Piercing Studio near you!

We're rolling out the new Medi-Daith for migraine headache service across Blue Banana. Availability may vary depending on store location and the availability of piercers trained in this procedure.

## ***How?*** You can just show up to a store - no appointments are required!

We operate on walk-ins and we will try to accommodate you. However the Medi-Daith takes longer, and if the store is busy you may be asked to return at a later time. You can contact a store before your visit if you would prefer to arrange an appointment at a quiet time.

## ***Who?*** We currently offer this piercing to anyone over the age of 13.

You may be required to bring photo-ID and will be required to answer health questions as per the regular Blue Banana piercing procedure. A parent or legal guardian will have to accompany anyone under the age of 16. Please contact your Blue Banana branch for details.

## ***When?*** Daith Migraine Headache Piercings are available NOW!

Visit a store to have your Medi-Daith Piercing!







# MORE ABOUT THE PROCEDURE...



## Results

There are no guarantees this will help or cure migraine headaches, but research has shown it can have a highly positive effect by reducing the severity and duration of migraine headache symptoms. For some, it can even prevent them completely.



## Cost

A Medi-Daith for Migraine Headaches piercing costs **£97.50** (may be subject to change).



## Time

The procedure takes a little longer than a regular daith piercing and involves additional steps to help the piercer locate a more precise point in the ear to pierce. If you opt to take part in the Daith Migraine Study (details below), it may take a few more minutes to answer some additional questions.



## Pain

It may hurt during the piercing, but a Medi-Daith Piercing won't hurt any more than your regular Daith/ear piercing. The pain of a migraine headache is far worse!



## Aftercare

As a Blue Banana customer, you will receive all the same care, aftercare and advice as if you were having a regular piercing.



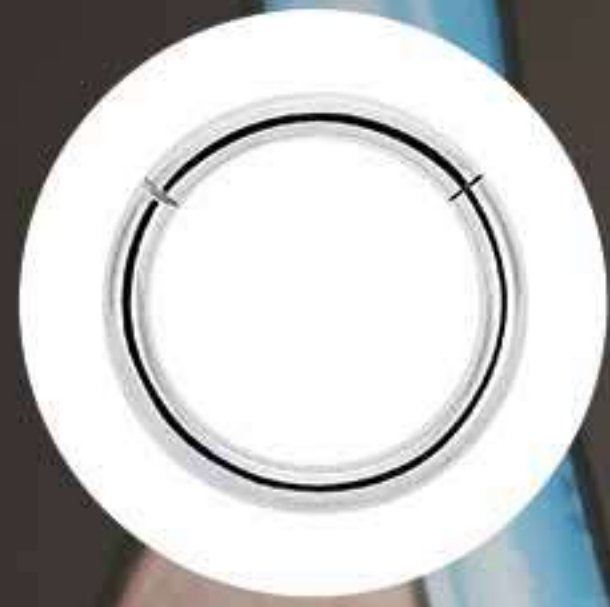
## Do you have more questions?

Over the next few pages Dr Chris Blatchley, our medical director for Medi-Daith for migraine headaches, answers many of the key Frequently Asked Questions you may have. You can always ask a member of staff in our stores who will be more than happy to assist.





# DO YOU WANT TO TAKE PART?



## Take part in our scientific research programme

During your visit, you can also opt to participate in additional scientific research. Our collaboration with the London Migraine Clinic has allowed us to develop more advanced techniques to help locate the correct area for a Medi-Daith Piercing. If you consent to take part in the LMC study (led by Dr Chris Blatchley) your participation and your experience can help the progress into the research of daith piercings and their effect on migraine headaches.

**We have a dedicated leaflet on this.**

**You can also read about it on our website at:**

 [www.bluebanana.com/migraines](http://www.bluebanana.com/migraines)





# FAQs

## IS A MEDI-DAITH THE RIGHT TREATMENT FOR MY MIGRAINE HEADACHES?

A photograph of Dr Chris Blatchley, a man with grey hair and glasses, wearing a grey suit and a patterned tie. He is standing in a clinical setting with medical equipment visible in the background.

NOTES WRITTEN BY:  
**DR CHRIS BLATCHLEY**  
London Migraine Clinic

### Can Blue Banana piercers give medical advice about my migraine headaches?

Blue Banana piercers are expert piercers, but they are not medically trained and cannot give specific medical advice about your migraine headaches. If you need medical advice, this should always come from your GP.

### Do I need a letter from my doctor?

1. Most people have had their migraine headaches for years, and may be finding that treatments from their doctor are not controlling them. If you have already visited your GP about your headaches, then the simple answer is no you don't need to see anyone before arranging to have a Medi-Daith with Blue Banana.
2. Very rarely, headaches are caused by another illness. If your headaches have started recently, or have changed in nature we always recommend that you contact your GP first. This is simply to ensure there are no other underlying causes.
3. If you are worried about your headaches, then you should always see your GP to discuss them.

### What is the evidence that a Medi-Daith can affect migraine headaches?

1. The Daith Piercing was first invented in 1992 as a cosmetic piercing, but some people soon began to report an unexpected improvement in their migraine headaches. However, there were also people with migraine headaches who found no change, so many people were sceptical of the effects. News on Daith for migraine headaches went viral on social media in 2016, and since then tens of 1000s have had one, many reporting great reduction in both severity and frequency of their migraine headaches.
2. Most doctors still find it difficult to accept there might be an effect because there has been no published research to medical standards, and the standard medical response is to believe that any effect must be a placebo response (in the mind). Our research is to explore whether there is an effect beyond placebo. We believe there is, but we also believe there should be medical research to confirm whether this is true.



**3.** By chance, the Daith passes through the only place on the body that is innervated by the vagus nerve, a calming nerve that controls many bodily functions. Electrical stimulation of the vagus is a medically accepted treatment for both migraine headache and epilepsy.

**4.** Through the use of specialist brain scans, there is scientific evidence that stimulating the skin in the same place as a Daith piercing produces changes in brain activity. A Daith piercing does not use any electrical stimulation but it heals very slowly. It is entirely reasonable to suggest that this irritation will produce similar changes in brain activity, as seen with electrical stimulation. Our research shows that temporarily stimulating the same area with a fine needle produces a temporary effect on migraine headache symptoms, and this disappears when the needle is removed. As yet, this brain scan research has not been performed on people with a Medi-Daith piercing, and this is something we plan to do in the next few months.

**5.** It is important to remember that a Medi-Daith does not work for everybody, and some get no response at all.

## How long can the effect of a Medi-Daith last?

**1.** Our initial research suggests that 40% of migraine headache sufferers can get an excellent response to a Medi-Daith that lasts over a year, even in those who are so seriously affected by their migraine headaches that all other treatments have failed.

**2.** When the effect of a Medi-Daith wears off, it appears it is possible to repeat the piercing to restart the effect.

**3.** If a Daith piercing has to be temporarily removed (e.g. for a brain scan – there is more information about this on the next page), then the effect appears to stop while the piercing is out. Understandably, recipients reporting an improvement are not keen to test this by unnecessarily having their piercing removed.

**4.** It is important to remember that a Medi-Daith does not work for everybody, and some get no response at all. At present we don't understand why, but we hope that LMC's ongoing research with Blue Banana will help us to understand this better.

## Is having a Medi-Daith painful?

Understandably people often ask this! Perhaps surprisingly, many people say they hardly felt a thing. Most migraine headache sufferers will say that the pain is only momentary and is not as bad as the pain of a migraine headache.



### Vagus Nerve

Electrical stimulation of the vagus is a medically accepted treatment for both migraine headache and epilepsy.





Tens of **1000s** have had  
a Medi-Daith piercing.  
Many reporting a great reduction  
in both severity and frequency of  
their migraine headaches.

## What will happen at my piercing appointment?

The appointment takes about 30 minutes. Please arrive 10-15 mins early so we can record some basic information about your migraine headaches before we start. The piercing itself is very quick but the preparation takes longer than a simple cosmetic piercing because we have to spend time measuring the exact place to pierce. This can't be hurried.

## Is a Medi-Daith suitable for my particular migraine headaches?

1. Migraine headaches are usually described by the symptoms you have, and not their causes. Migraine headaches affect the whole of the brain causing a general hyper-excitability of the nerve cells. However, some areas are more excitable than others. The specific areas most affected vary from person to person, and this can produce different symptoms in different people. It is more useful to think of the brain as having a faulty fire alarm panel that sets off the siren too easily. A Medi-Daith piercing is thought to work by stimulating the vagus nerve, one of the control nerves that can decrease the hyper-excitability in the brain's nerve cells.
2. The presence of marked visual symptoms seems to suggest whether a Medi-Daith might work for you. During a migraine headache, these symptoms present themselves as a dislike of bright or flickering lights, or difficulty looking at strong patterns of dark and light lines.
3. At present, we don't have specific evidence for rare migraine headaches such as Hemiplegic migraine headache. However, our general experience suggests that a Medi-Daith may help by cutting down the frequency and severity because the underlying brain process in migraine headaches is hyper-excitability of nerve cells throughout the brain.

## Should I stop my migraine headache medication after a Medi-Daith?

1. You should **not stop taking preventative drugs** for your migraine headaches (such as amitriptyline or propranolol) after your Medi-Daith Piercing. It may be possible to tail them off slowly after your Medi-Daith has stabilised, but you should always ask your doctor before you do. We strongly recommend that you continue taking them at the same dose for at least a month before you try reducing them.
2. '**Rescue**' drugs such as triptans and painkillers are only taken while you're having an attack. You will naturally reduce taking them as the frequency and severity of your attacks begin to change.





## **Will I only need a Medi-Daith in one ear or will both ears be better?**

1. We suggest starting with a Medi-Daith in one ear, usually the side that you get most migraine headaches on. You may find that this is sufficient for you to be in control of your migraine headaches (instead of them controlling you!).
2. If you are getting some improvements in your migraine headaches, but this isn't enough, then you can always get the other Daith pierced later. Our online surveys of several thousand migraine headache sufferers with a Medi-Daith piercing report that two Daith piercings can work better than one, presumably because both sides of the brain will be stimulated through both vagus nerves. Overall, this should also increase the general level of stimulation. We will soon be doing other research at LMC to measure the level of brain stimulation using specialist brain scans.
3. We don't generally recommend having both sides done on the same day because it is better to give the first one time to settle before you have the second.

## **Would I have to have my Medi-Daith removed if I need a brain scan for my migraine headaches?**

1. You cannot have an MRI scan if you have implants made of surgical steel (including Daith piercing jewellery), because the strong magnetic fields in the scanner cause the piercing to heat up. This doesn't happen with titanium, which is why we only use 100% titanium for Medi-Daith piercings, and recommend that if you change the jewellery later then you make sure it is not made of surgical steel.
2. If you are due to have an MRI scan on any part of your body then you should contact the hospital before the appointment and explain that you have a 100% titanium piercing in your ear. Generally, they will be happy for you to keep the piercing in because they can check with a magnet that the piercing is MRI safe. Unlike surgical steel, titanium is not magnetic.
3. If for a special reason the hospital does require the piercing to be removed, then a titanium Daith piercing can be temporarily replaced with a plastic one. Plastic is not generally used for Daith piercings because it is too fragile and can break easily. Blue Banana can arrange this for a small charge. It is an excellent opportunity to change to a new style of jewellery.



## Is a Medi-Daith good for children and adolescents?

1. Fortunately, migraine headaches are uncommon in young children. They can be very distressing for parents too when they occur. Younger children suffering from migraine headaches may well be under the care of a specialist doctor. Migraine headaches get much more common in adolescence, about the time of puberty and in late teens, especially in girls when they can often be associated with periods. A Daith piercing can be remarkably effective in teenagers, even in those who are suffering badly from their migraine headaches.
2. The minimum age for a Medi-Daith at Blue Banana is 13. Blue Banana has important rules about consent from a parent or legal guardian for those under 16 (ask in-store for details).
3. See the section on the next page about asking the school first before you have a Medi-Daith piercing.

## Are there any medical conditions that might stop me having a Medi-Daith?

1. If you have a chronic skin condition such as Eczema, Psoriasis or Keloid scarring then this may need a medical assessment before you have a Medi-Daith piercing. As a daith piercing is through cartilage it may heal very slowly. In fact, this slow healing may well be part of the reason it can work, because the irritation is thought to stimulate the Vagus Nerve.
2. If you have Eczema, Psoriasis or other similar skin conditions that have affected your ears then we would not recommend a Medi-Daith piercing.
3. If you have keloid scars on any other parts of your body then any type of piercing, including a Medi-Daith Piercing, is not recommended because the chance of developing a keloid on your ear is too high.

## I'm worried about getting an infection around my Medi-Daith.

1. As mentioned above, daith piercings are through cartilage, so can take a long time to heal. This is true for most ear piercings, except for common ear lobe piercings, where the piercing doesn't pass through cartilage. Mild infections are not uncommon, and can generally be avoided with an effective aftercare routine that includes cleaning the piercing with salt water. Your Blue Banana piercer will explain this when you have your piercing.
2. On some occasions, you might need antibiotics from your GP to assist with infections. On rare occasions you may have to have the piercing removed. If you have any concerns after your Medi-Daith, you should always speak to your Blue Banana piercer, who will be happy to assist you.



## Can I wear hearing aids/ear buds/stethoscopes with a Medi-Daith?

Since one end of the piercing is in the ear canal, it is generally difficult to wear hearing aids on the same side of the piercing. If you like listening to music through Ear Buds, then excellent small over-ear headphones are freely available. If you use a stethoscope at work then specialist electronic stethoscopes with headphones are available too.

## What about a Medi-Daith at work?

There are two potential problems you may have at work:-

1. Some jobs may have rules about wearing jewellery at work. Technically, an employer cannot stop you wearing a discrete Daith piercing if it is for your migraine headaches, since it would be discriminatory to do so. Having said this, there are many employers who will not have heard of a Medi-Daith for Migraine Headaches, so the best plan is to speak to your employer before you have a Medi-Daith. If your employer is already aware of your migraine headaches, they may be willing to make allowances in order to help you try and alleviate symptoms.
2. You should consider that there may be Health & Safety reasons related to the type of work that you do (e.g. on active service in the Armed Forces). It is easier and better to go and discuss your plans with your manager first.

## What about a Medi-Daith at school?

1. Similar rules apply in the school setting. However, we strongly advise that you discuss your Medi-Daith piercing plans **before** you get pierced. If your school is aware of your migraine headaches and the effects they can have, they may be more willing to allow you to get this piercing with the goal to alleviate symptoms.
2. Where schools are less understanding, we advise that you get a letter from your GP confirming that your child has migraine headaches and is looking to get a Medi-Daith piercing to help alleviate symptoms. If the school still has issues you may be required to get a specialist assessment from a Migraine Doctor.
3. It is **not** a good idea to arrive at school with a Medi-Daith without discussing it with them first!

## What about a Medi-Daith with sport?

If you play a heavy-duty contact sport such as rugby or wrestling then a Medi-Daith piercing probably won't be suitable for you. The chances of knocking it are likely too high. For other sports with less contact such as netball, it will probably depend on the level that you are playing. Perhaps a bandana covering your ear is all you need. Dr Chris has helped someone play netball at a national level, but they found they weren't allowed to at an international level. Hopefully, this will change as Medi-Daith piercings become more recognised as a treatment for migraine headaches.

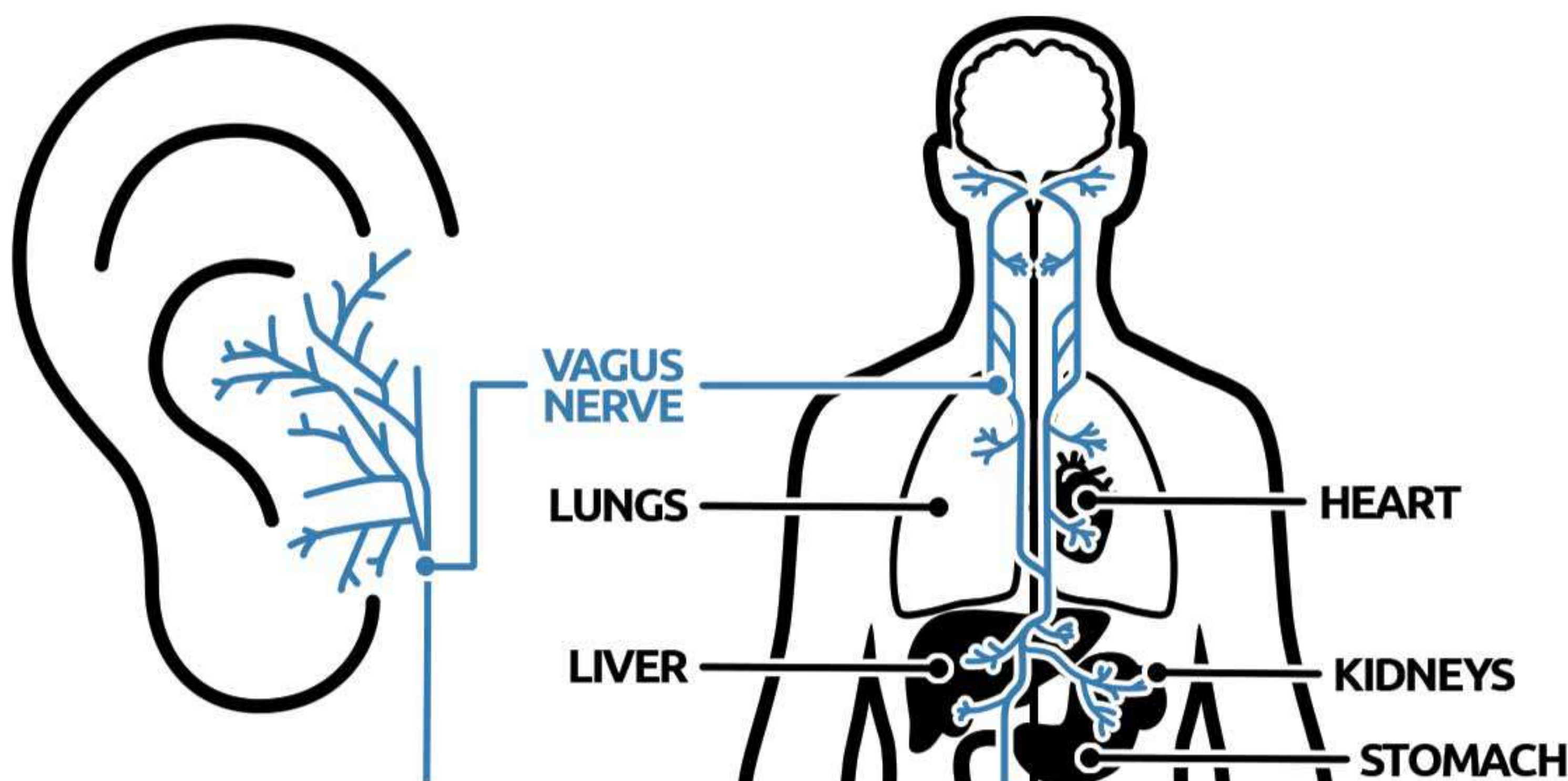




# ABOUT VAGUS NERVE STIMULATION

Vagus Nerve Stimulation (VNS) is a widely-accepted treatment for migraine headaches. It uses electrical currents, commonly sent through a small hand-held device, for gentle stimulation of the vagus nerve.

The vagus nerve is present through nearly the entire body, branching out to vital organs such as the heart, lungs, and stomach. It is one of 12 pairs of cranial nerves that connect to the brain. It is the primary sensory nerve in the body that transmits data to the brain and from the brain to the body to regulate and control many different functions. This includes pain regulation, anxiety responses, fatigue, heart rate, digestion, and lung function.



**Fig 1.** The vagus nerve runs through the body and plays a part in controlling bodily functions.

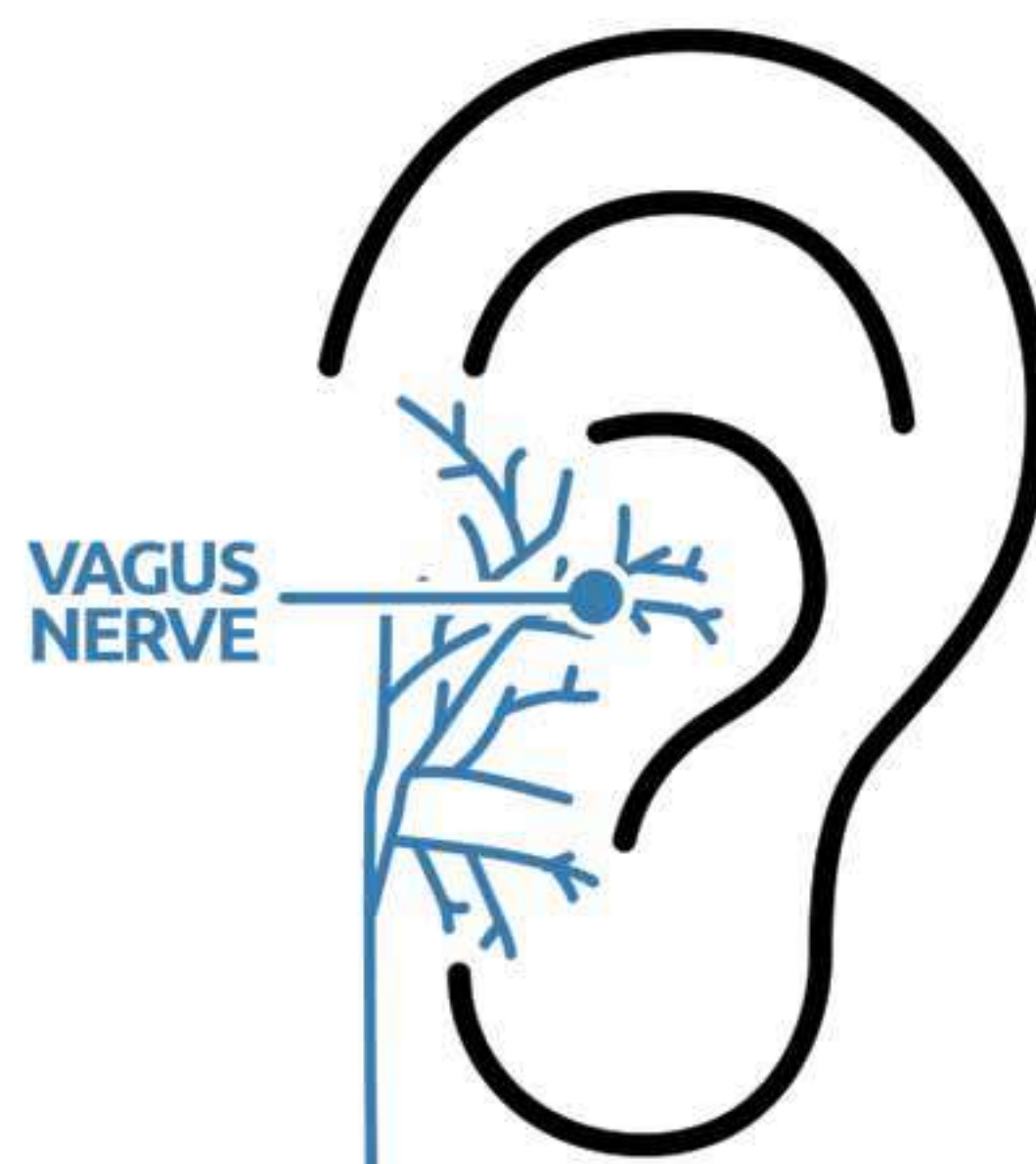
VNS is a non-invasive method that is widely preferred as patients do not need to rely on prescribed medication or injections for pain relief. In the US, VNS is an FDA-approved treatment for migraine and cluster headaches. These treatments are also available in some UK locations as part of the NHS service.

You'll be able to find plenty of examples of different VNS devices that are used online. Most are smaller handheld products that can produce safe, yet effective, electrical pulses. Patients and users can apply the device themselves and, as you'll see online, simply hold the device to the underside of their jawline.



Alongside the common use of VNS treatments, there is already a growing body of medical literature on the benefits of using the auricular nerve area as a key area for stimulating response from the vagus nerve.

The peer-reviewed paper *Current Directions in the Auricular Vagus Nerve Stimulation II – An Engineering Perspective* discusses the benefits of focusing the electrical current stimulation mentioned above on the area around the auricular branch of the vagus nerve. It states: “The external ear is an ideal place for a non-invasive or minimally invasive stimulation of VN” (Kaniusas et. al, 2019, p. 2). They continue to describe the auricle “especially its aVPN endings as a potentially “powerful gateway to the brain”. (Kaniusas et. al, 2019, p. 2).



**Fig 2.**  
The auricular branch of the vagus nerve is found beneath the skin surface of the ear canal.

## Medi-Daith & VNS Research

The Medi-Daith piercing, available at Blue Banana, is a part of this body of research that is still discovering the effects of stimulating and piercing the vagus nerve. It sits alongside other efforts to try and work out ways to prevent the negative effects of debilitating illnesses such as chronic migraines and cluster headaches.

Usually, vagus nerve stimulation uses the neck where the vagus nerve is easy to find but with a precise tool, the Medi-Daith procedure locates the vagus nerve in the ear to give the client a classic daith piercing but with precise placement.

This method has been employed in Blue Banana stores across the UK with Blue Banana's specialist piercers being trained in the method of Medi-Daith piercing by Dr Chris Blatchley of the London Migraine Clinic. These piercings are being offered as a part of a medical study into the effectiveness of Daith piercings as a means of relieving the discomfort of migraine headaches.

**Read more about Vagus Nerve Stimulation and how Medi-Daith fits into this existing world of research.**

 [www.bluebanana.com/vns](http://www.bluebanana.com/vns)





# ABOUT BLUE BANANA

If you're not familiar with Blue Banana and what we offer then let us fill you in!

Blue Banana has been part of the alternative scene since 1997 and has been providing alt fashion fans with top fashion and items you won't get in your regular high street store. We have an online shop for our products and 13 UK high-street stores, all with their own fully-equipped piercing studio.

We're hugely experienced in the world of body piercing and have pierced 1000s of customers in our time! Our cohort of highly experienced piercers are trained by the best and are adept with all the techniques and processes required for piercings all over the body.

You're in safe hands when it comes to a Blue Banana piercing.

## Aftercare Information

Our piercing aftercare advice and guides are second-to-none. Before you leave the store we'll make sure you are fully equipped with all the knowledge and know-how you'll need to look after your new piercing. If you experience ANY issues with your piercing, you're welcome to pop back to see us.

Our website is full of information and guides on how to best look after all kinds of different piercing types. You can either visit the dedicated Daith Piercing Aftercare section or, check out the full Ear Piercing guide.

 [www.bluebanana.com/earpiercing](http://www.bluebanana.com/earpiercing)

## Store Locations

- BIRMINGHAM
- BRISTOL
- CARDIFF
- COVENTRY
- EXETER
- LEICESTER
- MANCHESTER
- NEWPORT
- NOTTINGHAM
- PLYMOUTH
- SHEFFIELD
- SWANSEA
- SWINDON
- WOLVERHAMPTON



Medi-Daith Piercings are only available at select stores. For more information please go to:

 [www.bluebanana.com/migraines](http://www.bluebanana.com/migraines)

## RECOMMENDED AFTERCARE PRODUCTS

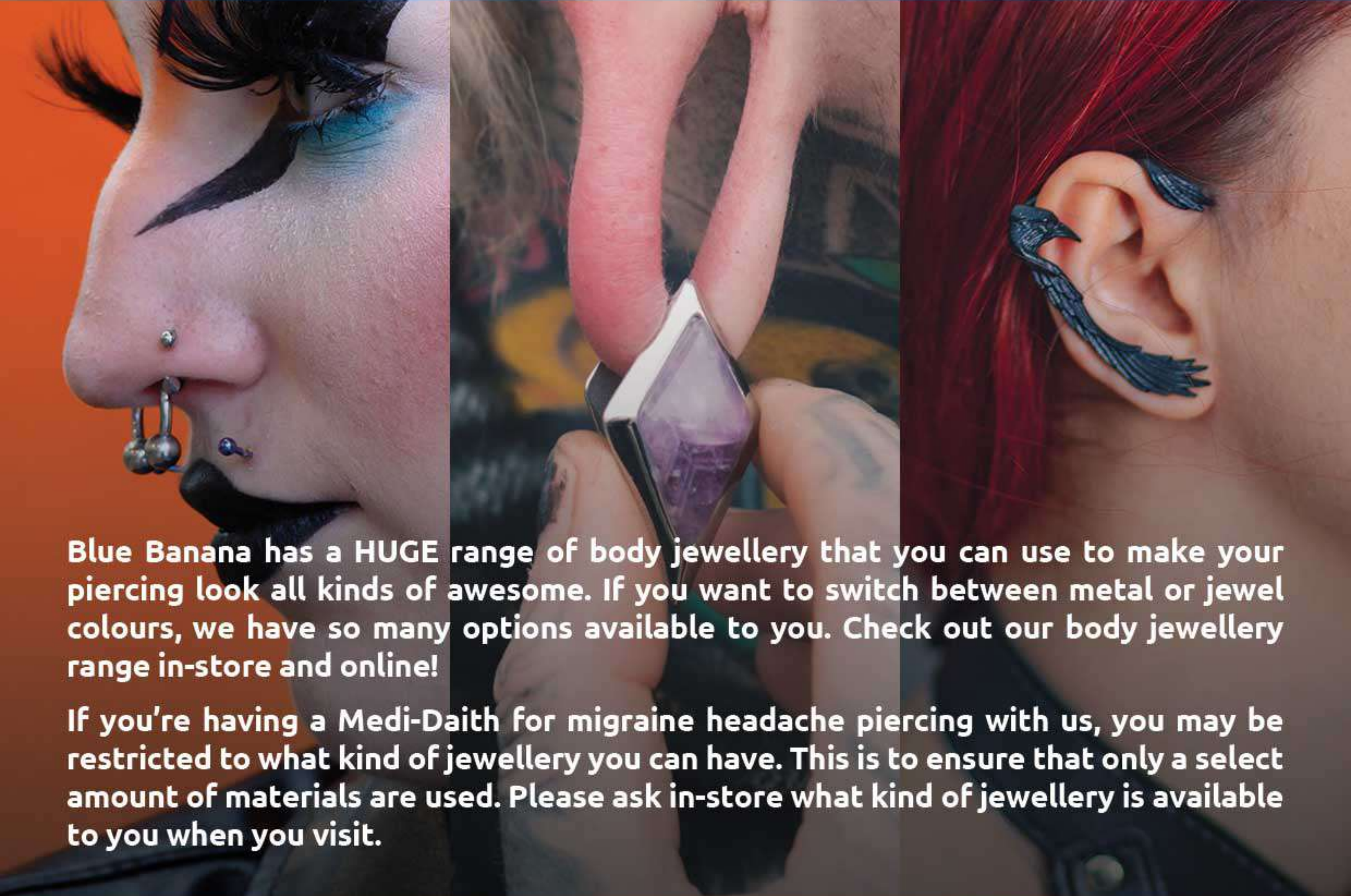
When it comes to looking after piercings, we strongly recommend our **Ultimate Advanced Aftercare Solution**! It gently cleans piercings, keeping pierced areas clean and sterile.

If that's not for you, we can always recommend our **Tea Tree Oil Kit** as an alternative.





# BODY PIERCING JEWELLERY



Blue Banana has a HUGE range of body jewellery that you can use to make your piercing look all kinds of awesome. If you want to switch between metal or jewel colours, we have so many options available to you. Check out our body jewellery range in-store and online!

If you're having a Medi-Daith for migraine headache piercing with us, you may be restricted to what kind of jewellery you can have. This is to ensure that only a select amount of materials are used. Please ask in-store what kind of jewellery is available to you when you visit.

## ABOUT THE L.M.C.

LONDON MIGRAINE CLINIC

CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR MIGRAINE TREATMENT

The London Migraine Clinic is a centre of excellence for the treatment of migraine headaches. The clinic is run by Dr Chris Blatchley. Dr Chris trained as a doctor at Cambridge University and St Thomas Hospital, London. He started the London Migraine Clinic 10 years ago to study the pathophysiology of migraine headaches and offer cutting-edge migraine headache treatments, including Botox and Medi-Daith Piercing, as treatments for sufferers of this often debilitating condition.

The clinic's work into the effectiveness of Medi-Daith Piercings is already sparking broader conversation within the scientific community. Through Dr Chris's training of our Blue Banana piercers, we are delighted to now be offering the LMC's Medi-Daith migraine headache piercing at a Blue Banana store near you!



# THE HISTORY OF MEDI-DAITH FOR MIGRAINE HEADACHES

Migraine headaches are very common. About 1 in 8 women suffer from them, making migraine headaches about the most common illness in young people throughout the world. Daith ear piercing became popular soon after it was invented in 1992. Initially cosmetic, people immediately began reporting that their migraine headaches seemed to be better. As the number of Daith piercings being performed grew, so did the number of reports on the positive effects on migraine headaches. This leads more and more people to seek out a Daith piercing to specifically help with their migraine headaches.

In 2015, this migraine headache improvement went viral on social media. The numbers exploded, and Dr Chris Blatchley, of the London Migraine Clinic, decided the medical profession should start investigating the effect. His international survey in 2017 showed for the first time that Daith piercing really needed medical research, so he went on to measure the effect on his own patients. This showed that about 40% seemed to get an excellent response that could last for at least a year, and often more. This is more effective than many of the existing treatments you can get from your GP.

You can now benefit from Dr Chris's LMC Medi-Daith Protocol which came out of his research. He has taught this to Blue Banana's most experienced piercers, to ensure that you receive a state-of-the-art Medi-Daith for Migraine Headaches. Dr Chris and Blue Banana are collaborating together to collect the first large-scale evidence, so that doctors can feel confident about recommending it to their patients!

## HOW TO GET YOUR MEDI-DAITH FOR MIGRAINE HEADACHES

### 📍 NATIONALLY

You can visit one of the many Blue Banana stores.

(Please check online at [www.bluebanana.com/migraines](http://www.bluebanana.com/migraines) to see which stores provide the Medi-Daith for Migraine Headaches).

- When you have your Medi-Daith at Blue Banana you will need to register with LMC. (Go to [www.london-migraine-clinic.co.uk/bluebanana](http://www.london-migraine-clinic.co.uk/bluebanana) to do this).
- You can register with LMC before your appointment, or when you arrive. There is no charge for this and it only takes a few seconds.
- Once you've registered with LMC, they'll invite you to complete a comprehensive migraine headache assessment. If you later need medical advice then the doctors at LMC can do this quickly and efficiently with the help of the information you give.
- When you have your piercing, you'll also be invited to join the world's first large-scale medical research project to record the effects of a Medi-Daith for 12 months.

### 📍 IN LONDON

If you live closer to London you can go to the London Migraine Clinic.

(More info at [www.london-migraine-clinic.co.uk](http://www.london-migraine-clinic.co.uk)).

