



DECEMBER Newsletter

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HEADACHES AND YOU



Headaches are one of the most common complaints our patients have. They vary in ranges of slightly nagging to completely debilitating. We often hear patients who suffer from chronic headaches describe them as their “normal headaches.” When you suffer from these headaches for so long, they often become part of your regular regimen. But in fact, headaches are never normal. It can be easy to forget that pain is a normal bodily reaction, and not a cause to the injury or disease. Your body experiences pain in order to remind you that there is something wrong. Though some types of headaches may occur more often in certain demographics of people, they can occur in men and women of all ages.

THANK YOU, PATIENTS!

The greatest compliment our patients give is the referral of their loved ones.

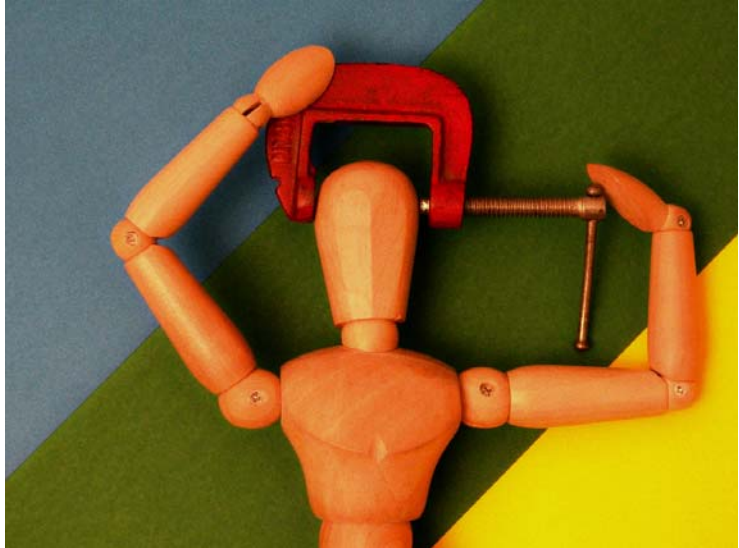
We appreciate that you trust us enough to recommend a loved one into our care. Your continued thoughts are much appreciated.



TYPES OF HEADACHES

The most common forms of headaches are tension and migraine headaches. Tension headaches typically occur with muscle tension in the head, neck, shoulders, and jaw. They often present gradually and get worse, feeling like a dull pain that is like a headband gradually squeezing the head harder and harder. This type of pain is usually on the less severe side, and can last from hours to days.

Migraine headaches are not as common as tension headaches, but are more common in women than in men. Migraine sufferers may report having their first attack in their teens, and they continue to recur for years. Sensitivity to light and loud sounds, as well as nausea can often accompany these headaches. Certain people may also know when they are about to have an episode. These symptoms may vary, and are called a prodrome. Some people will experience visual disturbances as seeing flashes, spots, stripes, or having blurred vision; that's known as an aura. These types of headaches can be very debilitating and can last for hours to days, with little effect by over-the-counter painkillers.



Other types and causes of headaches can range from cluster headaches, space occupying lesions, meningitis, hypertension, sinus infection, or trauma.

DIAGNOSIS

Like any other complaint, it is very important to get the right diagnosis for your problem in order to properly treat it. This is important in identifying a serious underlying cause. Your Chiropractor should take an in-depth history and perform a thorough examination to determine the cause of your symptoms, and the seriousness of your problem. If it is necessary, other special tests may be used to help determine the type of care you need, including x-rays, laboratory tests, special imaging (such as CT scan or MRI), or a headache diary.



Facts about headaches:

- Tension headaches and migraines are the most common.
- Rebound headaches can occur from overuse of painkillers.
- Headaches can be the result of serious underlying health problems.
- Most headaches can be treated through conservative care such as Chiropractic.
- There are no "normal" headaches.

TREATMENT

There are various common ways to treat headaches. One thing you can do at home is to take a headache log. Think of this log as your daily diary. This diary should contain information such as the date and time you get each headache, food/drinks you have consumed during those days, the amount of sleep you get each day, when the headaches started and stopped, and anything else that may be going on in your life. This information should be as detailed as possible, and may be extremely helpful in determining what is causing your headache.

If you seek care with your primary care doctor, they may also prescribe various types of pain-killers, over-the-counter medication, or even antidepressants or other medications. Many people suffer from rebound headaches, which are types of recurrent headaches that may result from overuse of pain medication. It is important to keep in mind that medications have side effects, some more serious than others, so it is extremely important to seek medical advice before taking any types of medication for your pain. If your headaches are more advanced or are due to more serious underlying problems referral to other specialists may follow, including a headache clinic or a neurologist.

Other types of care may include ice/heat therapy, physical therapy, simple rest in a dark room, massage, acupuncture, biofeedback, meditation, exercise, stress management, and lifestyle changes.

CHIROPRACTIC AND HEADACHES

As with most ailments, conservative care is generally the preferred treatment method. Fortunately, most headaches are not life-threatening and can be managed conservatively through Chiropractic care. Treatment can vary with the type of headache and causes of your headache. But Chiropractic care, particularly cervical manipulation, has been very effective in eliminating or reducing the frequency/intensity of headaches, particularly when you know your headache is coming.

Headaches are often accompanied by tense muscles of the neck, shoulders, and upper back. This tension may cause joint irritation and restrict motion of your joints. Through Chiropractic adjustments, that motion can be restored, allowing those muscles to relax.

Only your Chiropractor can determine if your headaches can be helped through Chiropractic care, and prescribe a treatment plan specific to you. Headaches can often accompany other bodily injuries or even be a result of serious conditions, so it is important to consult your Chiropractor if you are experiencing them.

Do NOT suffer more than you need to. Contact your Chiropractor today!



**We would like to wish you a very
Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year!**