

Help for Headache Sufferers

by William R. Mayer, BS DC PA

Q. Dear Dr. Mayer, I have been having headaches two to three times a week for a long time. About one to two times a month I get a migraine. I have tried lots of different cures and seen numerous doctors. Can chiropractic help me?



column and to answer your question, I will try to be more specific.

For anyone who is suffering from a recurring headache (two- three times a week), it is important to recognize it as a serious sign that something is wrong. Please remember that the headache itself is not the problem. It may sure feel like the problem when you have one, especially in the case

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A. A headache is one of the most common problems or symptoms that affect humanity. It is also one of the most common symptoms that we treat in chiropractic. There are numerous types of headaches and even more common problems: infections, hangovers, stress, fatigue, etc. To talk about all the types of headaches and all the possible causes would fill a book. Therefore, for the purpose of this

of a migraine. However, the headache is only a symptom that something else is wrong. Most people treat a headache by taking some sort of painkiller such as aspirin or Tylenol. Although this may give temporary relief, it is usually not the answer, especially for a repetitive headache. Too often, we associate lack of symptoms or "no pain" as being healthy, when this is usually far from the truth. If you were

driving in your car down the road and the oil light came on, how many of us would cut the wire to the warning light? Hopefully, not too many, yet that is what you are doing to your body when you ignore your body's warning lights and numb yourself with painkillers.

The migraine is one of the more painful types of headaches often leaving the sufferer in bed and immobilized. Most migraine sufferers notice symptoms that occur before the headache actually hits. These include visual changes, dizziness, muscle contraction, nausea, etc. The headache itself may last from a few minutes to days. Once the full-blown migraine hits, there are few painkillers that will have much effect.

As to the chiropractic approach to headaches, especially repetitive headaches, a first step is a good case history. Through the case history and consultation, we determine patterns and possible causes. A good example would be a car accident which may have occurred sometime before the headaches began. This is followed by an exam and the appropriate x-rays. In the majority of cases, we find the problem usually is caused by one or more subluxations (misalignment of the vertebrae) in the neck.

When there is a subluxation in the cervical spine, which results in pressure on the nervous system, one of the most

common symptoms is a headache. With some patients, the misalignment is so bad that things such as stress, extra tension, or small trauma are enough to set off a chain of events that result in a headache.

The scientific evidence supporting the chiropractic claim that spinal cure is essential for those suffering from headaches is proliferating.

In conclusion, it is important to know that a headache should be treated as a warning sign. The more frequent or more severe the headache, the greater the warning sign. Simply numbing a headache with painkillers is not the answer. The warning signs are for your benefit; the body is telling you that something is wrong. Chiropractic can often be the answer to the problem, especially for the patient who has tried "lots of different cures" and not had any success.

If you are suffering from severe headaches or know someone who is, please share this information with them. Chiropractic may be the answer.

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**BACK
TALK**

*Dr. William R.
Mayer*