

Headaches and Chiropractic

Living Life Without Headaches

Headaches are very common, but definitely not normal for the human body! A large study showed a staggering 38% prevalence of tension-type headache in the general population over a one year period. Of those affected, 8.3% lost workdays because of their headaches and 43.6% reported decreased effectiveness at work, home or school.



Why do I get headaches in the first place?

Headaches happen when the blood vessels and / or nerves entering your skull are irritated. The onset of headaches can have many contributing factors such as stress, nutritional choices and sleep habits.

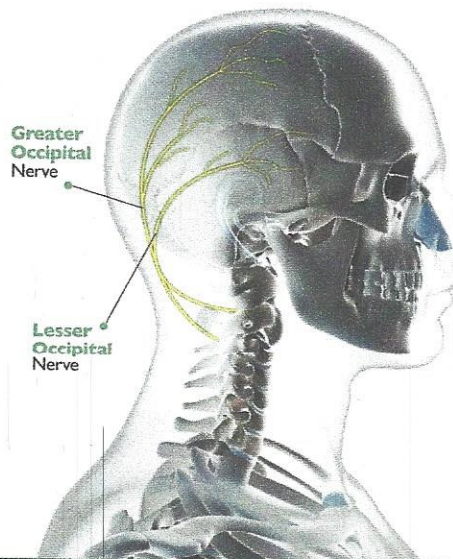
These factors can often cause Vertebral Subluxation – a condition that affects the movement of your spine and ultimately the surrounding nerves which travel back into the skull.

Anatomy of a headache

The nerves in your Cervical Spine (neck) are the common link for many types of headaches. In studies, noxious stimulation of the nerve roots exiting the upper neck have been shown to elicit headaches.

Neck muscles, ligaments and connective tissue have also been shown to cause headaches.

In the run of a year, on average **38%** of the population suffers from *tension headaches.*



How do chiropractors help with headaches?

Your chiropractor will perform a thorough health history and physical examination to determine if you have vertebral subluxations, as well as any other factors which may be contributing to your headaches. By correcting your subluxations using safe and gentle chiropractic adjustments, your chiropractor will restore proper function to your neck and relieve pressure on the nerves which enter the skull.

Migraine headaches, chronic tension-type headaches and cervicogenic headaches have all been shown to respond favorably to chiropractic adjustments.

Can't I just take medication to help with my headaches?

Even though drugs may help temporarily relieve your symptoms, it is important to understand that they do not treat the root cause of headaches. Suppressing your symptoms with medications also may cause undesired side effects in the long run and can be harmful to organs like the liver and kidneys.

Different *types* of headaches

Dozens of sub-classes of headaches have been identified, but in general the most common types are:

Cervicogenic Headache	Any headaches caused by structures in the neck
Tension-Type Headache	Constant pressure, like head is being squeezed in a vice
Migraine Headache	Severe headaches with a variety of nervous system symptoms
Cluster Headache	Recurring one-sided attacks of severe pain behind eye or temple
Rebound Headache	Pounding headaches from caffeine or medication withdrawal
Sinus Headache	Headache with pain and pressure around sinus cavities in face

Headache prevention

The best treatment for headaches is to not get them in the first place! Your chiropractor can help you assess your lifestyle factors and provide specific advice to help you prevent headaches from appearing in the future.

Getting checked regularly for vertebral subluxations is essential in reducing nervous system stress as part of your preventative approach to the most common types of headaches.