



**BODY GENIUS®**  
INSTITUTE

## THE ULTIMATE HEADACHE & MIGRAINE RELIEF GUIDE

THE BODY GENIUS SECRETS BEHIND

OVERCOMING HEADACHES

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# Headaches

The pain of a headache can make day-to-day life a miserable challenge, and the 'common' headache is commonly overlooked or masked with painkillers like aspirin or Neurofen. This habit can often be a slippery slope as painkillers don't address the underlying causative factors of a headache and may themselves add to the toxic load within the body.

So just how prevalent are headaches?

A World Health Organization (WHO) report stated that around 47% of adults worldwide will have experienced headache in the last year. (1) A tension headache is the most common type of primary headache with almost 90% of adults experiencing tension headache. A migraine is the second most common type of headache, third most prevalent disorder worldwide and ranked as the seventh highest cause of disability.

In 2013, the [International Headache Society](#) released its latest classification system for headaches.

- Primary headache
- Secondary headache
- And cranial neuralgias, facial pain, and other headache

Although there are 150 different types of

headaches classified, there are four types of headaches that are most common. These include: [\(2\)](#) [\(3\)](#)

## TENSION

This is the most common type of headache among adults and teenagers. Tension headaches are also known as stress headaches, chronic daily headaches or chronic non-progressive headaches. Causing mild to moderate chronic pain, they come and go over time.

## CLUSTER

These headaches are the most severe, but least common type. The pain is intense and can feel like a burning or piercing pain behind the eyes. Cluster headaches occur in groups over a period of time lasting from a couple of weeks to a couple of months. They may go away for months or years but then come back.

## SINUS

Inflamed sinuses can cause pain, pressure or fullness which is experienced in your cheeks, forehead, bridge of your nose, and behind your eyes. Usually other sinus symptoms, such as a runny nose, fever, pressure in the ears and facial swelling, occur at the same time.

## MIGRAINE

Migraine headaches can last from a few hours to a few days and usually occur one or more times a month. People usually have other symptoms with migraines, including: sensitivity to light, noise or smells; nausea or vomiting; loss of appetite; and upset stomach or belly pain.

A child experiencing a migraine headache may turn pale, feel dizzy, have blurry vision, a fever and an upset stomach.

- Pounding
- Unrelenting
- Constant or intermittent
- Mild or intense

In most individuals, the cause of a headache is often multi-factorial making it difficult to pinpoint the precise cause(s). With that said, a headache is a good indicator that your body needs some 'love' and a little bit of investigative work can uncover what is missing.

## MIXED HEADACHE SYNDROME

This type of headache is also known as a transformed headache and includes symptoms of both migraine and tension headaches. Adults and children may both experience mixed headaches.

So, what are the most common causes of headaches and what are the best methods for identifying the underlying causative factors?

*A headache is NOT your body's way of telling you it's lacking in Neurofen*



## HEADACHE - COMMON SYMPTOMS

- Throbbing
- Sharp
- Squeezing

A headache is a way of telling you that something needs to change and that possibly you've been pushing yourself a little too hard and not following the '[Foundation Principles of health](#)'.

There are 11 systems within the human body and prolonged periods of intense stress, poor sleeping patterns, inadequate diet, and lack of self-care, can throw these delicate systems out of balance.

- Integumentary
- Respiratory
- Digestive
- Cardiovascular
- Endocrine
- Nervous
- Skeletal
- Muscular
- Lymphatic
- Urinary
- Reproductive

A skilled (holistic) practitioner will consider all 11 systems when looking to identify the underlying causative factors of your headache.

For many people, it's easy to understand how the skeletal, muscular and nervous systems of the body may be involved.

- Subluxations within the spinal column can contribute to headaches

- Knots or trigger points within muscles can be a contributing factor
- Neural wind-up or tension within the central nervous system (CNS) or peripheral nervous system
- (PNS) can also be a contributing factor.

However, what may be less obvious is how the other eight (8) systems may be involved: Endocrine (hormonal), respiratory (lungs), cardiovascular, reproductive, integumentary, urinary, digestive, and lymphatic.

In addition to physical health, [holistic practitioners](#) also need to consider the mental, emotional and spiritual health of their clients. Prolonged psycho-emotional stress, without treatment or healthy coping mechanisms can certainly contribute to a headache.

So, you may be wondering how you can make your headache go away? Or you may be searching for answers about how to prevent the chronic, reoccurring headache that you've been suffering from. Before we begin to look at the answers to those questions, let's first take a look at some of the more common causes of headaches.

# So, what causes the head to ache?

CAUSATIVE FACTORS	EVIDENCE
Heredity as headaches, especially migraines, tend to run in families	<a href="#">4</a>
Ocular (relating to the eyes)	<a href="#">5</a>
Stress	<a href="#">6, 7</a>
Stressful life events	
Intense Emotions	<a href="#">45</a>
Fatigue/exhaustion	<a href="#">8</a>
Poor sleeping patterns, lack of sleep, changes in sleep patterns, travel	<a href="#">9</a>
Dehydration	<a href="#">10, 11, 12</a>
Poor posture – mechanical loading of the head, jaw, neck	<a href="#">13, 14, 15, 16</a>
Dietary Factors	<a href="#">17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22</a>
Nutritional deficiencies (Vitamins, minerals, co-factors, etc)	
Additives and preservatives in the foods you eat	
Nitrates found in processed meats	<a href="#">23</a>
Aspartame (E951) – artificial sweetener	<a href="#">23, 51</a>
Sucralose – artificial sweetener	<a href="#">53</a>
Monosodium Glutamate (E621) – flavour enhancer	<a href="#">25, 26, 47</a>
Coffee	<a href="#">45</a>

Chocolate	<a href="#">45</a>
Cheese (Dairy)	<a href="#">48</a>
Dental Issues including temporomandibular joint (TMJ) disorders	<a href="#">27</a>
Grinding teeth, clenching jaw, and/or subluxation of the TMJ	
Poor gut health - dysbiosis	
Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)	<a href="#">28,29</a>
Constipation	<a href="#">30</a>
Allergies	
Muscular trigger points and tension	<a href="#">31, 32, 33</a>
Upper, middle or lower back strain	
Food allergies – including wheat/gluten	<a href="#">49, 52</a>
Chronic Rhinosinusitis (Sinusitis)	<a href="#">34, 35</a>
Male and female hormonal issues (neurohormonal issues)	<a href="#">36, 37, 50</a>
Ear infections or challenges	<a href="#">38</a>
Chronic systemic inflammation	
Illness such as colds, flus, sinusitis, and throat infections	
Hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar)	<a href="#">39</a>
Hormonal fluctuations before, during or after menstruation	<a href="#">36</a>

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Medications and drug reactions/interactions (polypharmacy)

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Overuse of pain medication

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[40, 41](#)

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Environmental causes such as second-hand smoke, pollution in the air, certain types of artificial lighting, chemicals given off from air-conditioners

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Recreational drugs

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Household Hazards such as carbon monoxide poisoning from faulty heaters or stoves, chemical cleaners, chemicals in carpets, chemicals in paints, mould, chemicals in personal care products, chemicals in make-up, and chemicals in perfumes.

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# Secondary Headaches

A secondary headache is a symptom of a disease and should be investigated by a medical professional to determine the underlying cause. Some of the more common causes of secondary headaches include ear infections, Influenza (flu) and other febrile (fever) illnesses, high blood pressure, glaucoma, and concussions.

When to see your doctor – RED FLAGS!

Individuals should seek medical care for new onset headaches or if headaches are associated with fever, stiff neck, weakness, change in sensation on one side of the body, paralysis, [papilloedema](#), change in vision, vomiting, change in behaviour, drowsiness, confusion, memory impairment and loss of consciousness. [\(44\)](#)

Let's take a closer look at a few of the more significant causative factors of headaches.

## THE FOUNDATION PRINCIPLES OF HEALTH

What makes these principles so important is that they apply to every human on earth regardless of where they live or their gender, age, ethnic background or religious beliefs. It's pretty simple in that we cannot violate these Foundation Principles without suffering the detrimental effects. As the great [Stephen R. Covey](#) has stated: "Values

drive our behaviour. Principles drive the consequences of behaviour."

With this in mind, each individual should focus on the '[Foundation Principles](#)' of health on a daily basis, whether they're looking to remain healthy or recovering from pain, illness or disease.

### FOUNDATION PRINCIPLES OF HEALTH

Organic Whole Foods	Adequate Hydration	Quality sleep patterns
Active Lifestyle	Mental Health	Spiritual Health
Emotional Health	Optimal Breathing Patterns	

Now if we review the list of causative factors for headaches presented above, how many of these causes are in direct violation of the foundation principles of health?

The answer is 23 out of 40 causes listed, or 55%. This may suggest that a significant number of people suffering from headaches would experience significant benefits including improvements in symptoms simply by paying strict attention to the foundation principles of health on a daily basis.



# Would you like to self-evaluate your own commitment to the Foundation Principles of health?

Take this simple test.

## DO YOU HAVE A HEALTHY DIET?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Unhealthy

Average

Whole foods only

## ARE YOU SUFFERING FROM STRESS? (WORK, HOME, RELATIONSHIP)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Highly stressed

Average

Very low stress

## HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR COMMITMENT TO HEALTH?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Low commitment

Average

Very high commitment

## HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR ENERGY LEVELS?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Very low

Average

High energy levels

## DO YOU HAVE HEALTHY SLEEPING PATTERNS?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Poor quality of sleep

Average

Sleep Well

## ARE YOU A SHIFT WORKER?

Yes

No

If you would like to take a more comprehensive look at your overall health, complete the Body Genius [Health Quiz](#).

## DIETARY

There has certainly been some debate over the last few decades as to what constitutes to 'perfect' human diet. However, if we aim to find some common ground when comparing the most promising of these diets, it would be in the fact that they're all promoting whole foods as the foundation for their eating principles.

For nearly 10 years, Weston Price and his wife travelled around the world in search of the secret to health. Instead of looking at people afflicted with disease symptoms, this highly-respected dentist and dental researcher chose to focus on healthy individuals, and challenged himself to understand how they achieved such amazing health.

Dr Price travelled to hundreds of cities in a total of 14 different countries in his search to find healthy people. He investigated some of the most remote areas in the world.

He observed perfect dental arches, minimal tooth decay, high immunity to tuberculosis and overall excellent health in those groups of people who ate their indigenous foods.

He found when these people were introduced to modernised foods, such as white flour, white sugar, refined vegetable oils and canned goods, signs of degeneration quickly became quite evident. Dental caries,

deformed jaw structures, crooked teeth, arthritis, and low immunity to tuberculosis became rampant amongst them.

Dr Price documented this ancestral wisdom including hundreds of photos in his book, *Nutrition, and Physical Degeneration*.

If we once again reflect on the list of 40 causative factors presented above, let us consider how many of these would likely be removed solely by following a completely whole food diet.

The answer is 12 out of 40 or 30% of the causative factors. You certainly wouldn't have to worry about the nitrates found in processed meats, harmful additives such as MSG, aspartame or sucralose, or coffee, alcohol, and chocolate. And by removing sports drinks, energy drinks, fruit juices, fizzy drinks, alcohol, and coffee, the likely side effect would be an increase in water consumption leading to proper hydration. As such, a whole food diet should be considered by anyone who is suffering from persistent headaches.

*The presence of any specific dietary trigger in migraine patients varies from 10 to 64% depending on study population and methodology.*



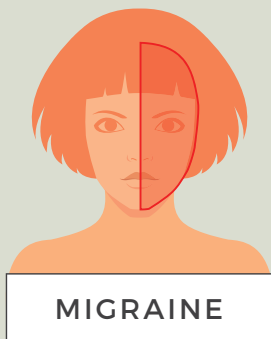
*Some foods trigger a headache within an hour while others develop within 12 hours post-ingestion.*

- Zoya Zaeem, Lily Zhou, Esma Dilli. 2016

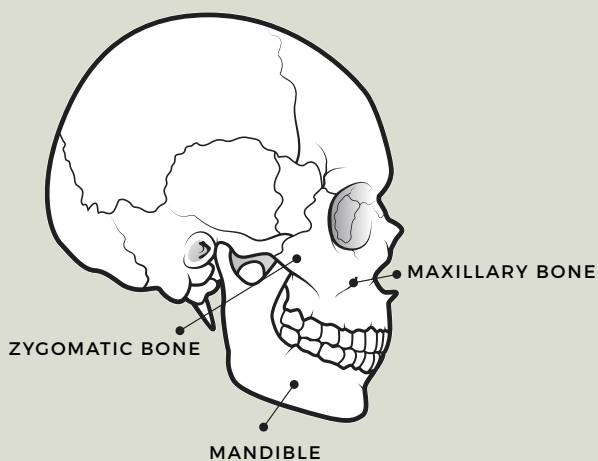
Let's take a look at the 'commonly reported food triggers' as listed on the [American Migraine Foundation](#) website.

- Alcohol, including red wine and beer
- Aspartame, an artificial sweetener and sugar substitute
- Beans and other foods that contain tyramine, like cured meat and smoked fish
- Foods that contain histamine such as Pickled or canned foods – sauerkrauts
- Matured cheeses and yogurts
- Smoked meat products – salami, ham, sausages
- Shellfish
- Some legumes, including beans, lentils, peanuts, peas and soybeans
- Nuts – walnuts, cashew nuts
- Chocolates and other cocoa-based products
- Caffeine (especially caffeine withdrawal)
- Citrus like lemons and oranges
- Foods containing monosodium glutamate (MSG), like canned foods
- Processed meats with sulphites
- Vitamins and herbal supplements

## COMMON LOCATIONS OF HEADACHE PAIN



OFTEN ON ONE SIDE OF THE HEAD  
BUT LOCATION VARIES



We have highlighted in GREEN the food items that would be eliminated simply by following a whole food diet.

### DENTAL

Pain from the temporomandibular joint (TMJ) can be easily mistaken for a common headache, mostly because the symptoms are so similar. But there are a few key differences that set TMJ headache apart from the more common tension headache.

### TMJ PAIN OR HEADACHE?

A 2006 study by the University at Buffalo School of Dental Medicine found that headaches related to TMJ disorder (TMJD) are often misdiagnosed as tension headaches.

82% of female cases and 17% of male cases that were included in this study had symptoms associated with TMJD.

31% were reported to have tension associated headaches by the research examiners. [\(46\)](#)

These findings suggest that health care providers may inaccurately diagnose TMJ-related pain as a regular stress-induced headache when the head pain could in fact be coming from a much more structural/physiological problem.

The practitioners at the Body Genius Institute often have their patients track their symptoms in addition to taking a questionnaire similar to this:

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS IN RELATION TO YOUR DENTAL HISTORY.	YES	NO
Stiffness in your jaw, making it difficult to open and close your mouth?		
Do you experience facial tenderness and pain?		
Do you experience earaches?		
Have you ever been knocked unconscious?		
Do you suffer from gum disease?		
Do your gums bleed when you brush or floss your teeth?		
Do you have any cavities?		
Do you have any 'fillings' or 'amalgams'?		
Do you have pain in your mouth or jaw when you chew food?		
Have you noticed that your jaw clicks or cracks when you talk or chew food?		
Do you wake up with a headache in the morning?		
Do you wake up with sore jaw muscles?		
Do you clench your jaw during the day or at night?		
Do you grind your teeth at night?		
Do you wear braces or splints? (day or night)		
Have you had any orthodontic work done during your lifetime?		
Have you had any dental surgeries performed during your <b>lifetime</b> ? (This may include root canals, removal of wisdom teeth, etc.)		
Have you suffered from high-stress levels for a long period of time?		

The answers to these questions, along with the tracking of symptoms can help the treating practitioner to determine if the TMJ is involved in your headaches and/or other symptoms.

It's often worth noting that headaches originating from the TMJ typically do not share other symptoms that often accompany tension headaches such as nausea, sensitivity to light and sound, vomiting, or fatigue. A TMJ headache can, however, trigger a migraine for those who are susceptible to them – another reason why addressing TMJ pain is so vital to your overall health.

## TMJ ASSESSMENT AND TREATMENT

The Pain and Dysfunction (P&D) practitioners at the Body Genius Institute are highly skilled at assessing the temporomandibular joint (TMJ) for dysfunction along with the upper cervical spine (neck) which is intimately connected to the TMJ on both an anatomical and functional level.

## TRIGGER POINTS

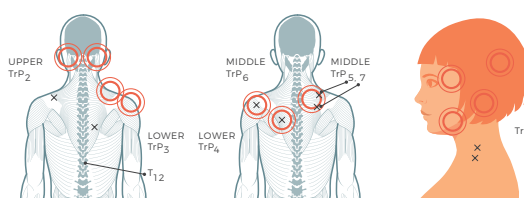
Trigger points are commonly described as 'trigger sites' or 'muscle knots'. These points are hyperirritable spots in skeletal muscle that are associated with taut bands of muscle fibres. Activation of trigger points may be caused by a number of factors including:

- Acute overload – Heavy lifting or quick acceleration during sport
- Chronic overload – Long hours sitting at

computers or training for sport

- Activation by other trigger points – Shoulder triggers can set off neck triggers
- Direct trauma – An opponent's knee striking your thigh muscle
- Spinal problems – Nerve dysfunction can lead to trigger points in the muscles
- Deficiencies – Vitamin and mineral deficiencies and/or dehydration
- Toxic overload – Toxicity within organs or glands

These taut bands (trigger points) are a common, **yet often overlooked**, cause of headaches.



A highly-skilled holistic practitioner will include palpation of the muscles surrounding the skull, face, jaw, neck and shoulders as part of their detailed initial assessment. If active trigger points are identified in muscles that refer to neck, face and head, the practitioner can then systematically determine whether these trigger points are contributing to the patient's headaches and other symptoms.

There are a wide range of treatment options available for alleviating the pain associated with active trigger points. One the most effective methods for clearing trigger points is dry needling.

### ACUPUNCTURE (DRY NEEDLING)

Dry needling is a treatment approach that has evolved from traditional acupuncture. It refers to the insertion of a fine needle into the muscles and connective tissues of the body to deactivate trigger points.

Dry needling helps to release these taut bands and to deactivate the trigger points, which in turn alleviates pain. Dry needling also alleviates muscular tension, increases the range of movement around joints, and improves circulation to a given area resulting in a greater healing response.

Dry needling is very effective as it can deactivate trigger points that are deep within the muscles (1-10cm). These trigger points can be challenging to reach with deep tissue massage. Likewise, dry needling is very successful at deactivating chronic trigger points that 'won't let go' with massage therapy.

This form of therapy is highly specialised & requires years of training & practice. All of the Body Genius P&D practitioners specialise in dry needling.

### SIDE EFFECTS OF MEDICATIONS

According to the [Australian Prescriber](#), the most widely prescribed medical drugs for the year 2015-2016 were as follows:

- Atorvastatin – Cholesterol lowering medication
- Perindopril – Control high blood pressure
- Rosuvastatin – Cholesterol lowering medication
- Amlodipine – Blood pressure lowering drug
- Paracetamol – Painkiller

A quick glance at the side effects of these drugs reveals that each and every one of the most commonly prescribed drugs in Australia has the potential to cause headaches as a side effect.

- [Atorvastatin](#)
- [Perindopril](#)
- [Rosuvastatin](#)
- [Amlodipine](#)
- [Paracetamol](#)

How many other medications create



headaches as a side effect of their use?

Check out this fantastic article '[The Dangers of Acetaminophen](#)' by Chris Kresser.

## HOUSEHOLD CLEANERS, PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS, COSMETICS

Headaches caused by toxic chemicals can be debilitating, but most people don't connect the pain with their environment.

The cosmetics, shampoos, lotions and other products we put on our bodies can be just as harmful as anything we put in them.

Ingredients found in face washes, sunscreens and more have been linked to everything from headaches and hormonal disruptions to cancer, and what's worse is that they go directly into your bloodstream when applied to the skin or hair.

Exposing yourself to a 'buffet' of chemicals on a daily basis could allow these chemicals into your system and increase your chances of ill-health, including headaches.

- Household Cleaners
- Personal Care Products
- Make-up
- Toilet paper, tampons, tissues

It's not only your skin that comes into contact with these potentially harmful chemicals. Think about some of the most 'delicate' areas of your body and consider how you may be exposing them to chemicals: Eyes, ears, nose, mouth, armpits, hands, groin, vagina, penis, anus.

*We can blame our toxic environment, the unhealthy things we put inside our bodies and stress for chronic, daily headaches.*

## CLEANING PRODUCTS

Cleaning is an essential component of daily life and maintaining personal hygiene is equally important.

However, household and cleaning products, along with personal care products – including soaps, shampoos, conditioners, body washes, creams, moisturisers, polishes, toilet paper, tissues, tampons, and even make-up – often include harmful chemicals. Even products advertised as "green" or "natural" may contain ingredients that can cause health problems.

We assume they are safe. But in fact, many popular household cleaners are dangerously toxic. Learn about the eight scariest substances hiding under your kitchen sink, and how to replace them with safer, more natural options that really work.



## EIGHT (8) OF THE MOST HARMFUL CHEMICALS FOUND IN THE HOME

### 1. PHTHALATES

Phthalates are found in fragranced household products, such as air fresheners, dish soap, even toilet paper. Because of proprietary laws, companies don't have to disclose what's in their scents, so you won't find phthalates on a label. If you see the word "fragrance" on a label, there's a good chance phthalates are present.

**HEALTH RISKS:** [Endocrine disrupter](#) and reduced sperm count in men.

### 2. PERCHLOROETHYLENE OR "PERC"

PERC is found in dry-cleaning solutions, spot removers, and carpet and upholstery cleaners.

**HEALTH RISKS:** [Neurotoxin](#), possibly carcinogen, dizziness, loss of coordination and other symptoms.

### 3. TRICLOSAN

Triclosan is found in most liquid dishwashing detergents and hand soaps that are labelled as "antibacterial".

**HEALTH RISKS:** Promotes the growth of drug-resistant bacteria. [Endocrine disrupter](#).

### 4. QUARternary AMMONIUM COMPOUNDS, OR "QUATS"

QUATS are found in fabric softener liquids and sheets and most household cleaners labelled "antibacterial".

**HEALTH RISKS:** Quats are another type of antimicrobial, and thus pose the same problem as triclosan by helping breed antibiotic-resistant bacteria. Skin irritant. Contribute to respiratory disorders.

### 5. 2 - BUTOXYETHANOL

2 - Butoxyethanol is found in window, kitchen, and multipurpose cleaners.

**HEALTH RISKS:** Law does not require 2-butoxyethanol to be listed on a product's label. A sore throat if inhaled, [narcosis](#), [pulmonary edema](#), and severe liver and kidney damage.

### 6. AMMONIA

Ammonia is found in polishing agents for bathroom fixtures, sinks and jewellery along with glass cleaner.

**HEALTH RISKS:** Irritant. Respiratory irritant. Exacerbate the symptoms associated with asthma, lung issues and breathing problems. Chronic exposure may lead to chronic bronchitis and asthma.

**7. CHLORINE**

Chlorine is found in scouring powders, toilet bowl cleaners, mildew removers, laundry whiteners, household tap water.

**HEALTH RISKS:** Both acute and chronic health conditions can result from exposure. Respiratory irritant. At a chronic level, it may be a serious thyroid disruptor.

**8. SODIUM HYDROXIDE**

Sodium Hydroxide is found in oven cleaners and drain openers.

**HEALTH RISKS:** Extremely corrosive. Can cause severe burns. A sore throat.

# Beware of greenwashing

If a cleaning product at your supermarket proclaims itself "green," "natural" or "biodegradable," that doesn't necessarily mean it's nontoxic.

In 2010 the environmental consulting firm TerraChoice Group produced a report called "The Sins of Greenwashing." In it, the group found more than 95% of so-called 'green' consumer products had committed at least one "greenwashing sin," like making an environmental claim that may be truthful but unimportant.

## COSMETICS - 12 INGREDIENTS TO AVOID

Sodium lauryl sulfate (SLS)	Butylated hydroxyanisole	Triclosan/triclocarban
Aminophenol	Parabens	Polyethylene (PEGs)
Retinyl palmitate, retinol	Petroleum distillates	"Fragrance"
Oxybenzone	Dibutyl phthalate, toluene	Hydroquinone

Want to test the potential risk of your cosmetics, home cleaners and other personal care products? Simply visit the [Environmental Working Group](#) website and search their database of more than 72, 000 products.

So why are we taking the time to highlight all of these chemicals found in personal care products, cleaning products and cosmetics?

Literally, hundreds of our clients have reported improvements in their health and happiness after reducing their exposure to chemicals in their own home and at work. For some headache and migraine sufferers, reducing their chemical exposure was the missing 'ingredient' in overcoming their symptoms and restoring their health. (Take the questionnaire below)

All of these chemicals have the ability to cause a headache or bring on a migraine. However, as you can see from the 'health risks' listed above, a headache could be the least of your worries.

In Part 2 of the ebook we will look at how you can begin to reduce your exposure to chemicals.

# Chemical exposure questionnaire

The purpose of this question is to determine how many of your household products contain potentially hazardous chemicals. If you're purchasing standard commercial brands, then you can assume the products contain potentially harmful chemicals.

With respect to personal care products such as perfumes, cologne, and makeup, once again you can assume that all commercial brands contain potentially harmful chemicals. Want to research your personal care products yourself to know for sure? You can do so here: Environmental Working Group – Over 72,000 products have been evaluated

PRODUCTS	NEVER	SOMETIMES	ALWAYS
Shampoo and/or conditioner	0	1	2
Body wash and soaps	0	1	2
Hair gel and hairspray	0	1	2
Deodorant	0	1	2
Tampons and sanitary pads	0	1	2
Toilet paper	0	1	2
Bleach, stain removers	0	1	2
Perfume or cologne	0	1	2
Make-up	0	1	2
Dishwasher tablets or liquid or powder	0	1	2
Dishwashing liquid	0	1	2
Floor cleaners, window cleaners, surface cleaners	0	1	2
Toilet bowl cleaners such as bleach	0	1	2
Toothpaste	0	1	2

Mouthwash	0	1	2
Tissues	0	1	2
Nail Polish and nail polish remover	0	1	2
Insect Repellent	0	1	2
DIY waxing kits	0	1	2

**MY TOTAL SCORE FOR 'PRODUCTS' IS ...**

Please answer the following questions

HABITS	NEVER	SOMETIMES	ALWAYS
I dye my hair with commercial hair dye	0	1	2
I use bug spray to kill insects (inside or outside)	0	1	2
I use plug-in air fresheners	0	1	2
I use spray air fresheners	0	1	2
I use plastic zip lock bags to store food	0	1	2
I drink from plastic water bottles	0	1	2
I reuse plastic water bottles	0	1	2
I swim in chlorinated pools	0	1	2
I take baths in chlorinated water	0	1	2
I take showers in chlorinated tap water	0	1	2
I drink tap water	0	1	2
I cook (heat) aluminium foil during food preparation	0	1	2
I burn scented candles in my home	0	1	2
I fertilize my lawn	0	1	2
I use weed killers on my lawn	0	1	2



I use weed killers (Gardenline, Roundup, Yates, etc.)	0	1	2
I store my food in plastic containers	0	1	2
I am exposed to chemicals at my place of work	0	1	2

MY TOTAL SCORE FOR 'HABITS' IS ...

MY TOTAL SCORE (PRODUCTS + HABITS) IS ...

Now place an X on the continuum at the appropriate point to approximate your level of risk.



## CERVICOGENIC HEADACHES



'Cervico' means neck

'Genic' means origin

### CERVICOGENIC HEADACHE

Pain (headache) originating from the neck. Cervicogenic headaches are headaches which result from spinal problems in the neck, such as disc degeneration or prolapse, facet joint arthritis, soft tissue injuries to ligaments or tendons, or spinal subluxations.

Cervicogenic headaches are quite common and often under-diagnosed.

### WHAT MAY CAUSE CERVICOGENIC HEADACHES?

Any type of neck condition can result in this type of headache including: Degenerative joint disease in the neck (arthritis), a disc

prolapse, whiplash, or facet joint subluxation.

### WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF CERVICOGENIC HEADACHE?

This type of headache typically creates pain at the back of the head. This pain may spread to the top of the skull and sometimes to the forehead or temples. The sufferer may also experience pain behind the eyes. There is often, but not always, concurrent neck pain that fluctuates in intensity with the headache itself. The patient may also complain of nausea, poor concentration and irritability.

### WHAT ARE THE OTHER POSSIBLE DIAGNOSES?

Cervicogenic headaches may resemble occipital neuralgia, which is a condition that causes localized pain and neurological abnormalities in the distribution of the occipital nerves at the back of the head.

Migraines may also be confused with cervicogenic headaches.

The pain associated with trigger points in muscles surrounding the neck can also be confused with cervicogenic headaches.

## HOW ARE CERVICOGENIC HEADACHES TREATED?

It's important to try to determine exactly which structures in the neck are causing the headaches. Once this has been done, an appropriate treatment may be prescribed.

Initially, cervicogenic headaches can be successfully treated with [acupuncture](#), [dry needling](#), [physiotherapy](#), [chiropractic care](#) and [natural supplementation](#). Of course, postural correction along with avoidance of other aggravating activities (work duties, sport, activity) is important.

In Part 3 of this book we will look extensively at the use of acupuncture, physiotherapy, chiropractic care to successfully treat headaches and migraines.

Join us now for Part 2 of the book during which we will focus on 'Natural Remedies' and ideas on how you can begin to treat yourself.

*A headache is NOT your body's way of telling you it's lacking in Neurofen!*

The literature is clear, the use of NSAIDS for neck pain or headaches carries a hundred-times-greater risk of serious injury or death than cervical adjustments.

## NSAIDS

- Ibuprofen – Nurofen, Advil and Bugesic
- Diclofenac – Voltaren, Dinac and Fenac
- Naproxen – Naprosyn and Naprogesic
- Celecoxib – Celebrex.

The chance of you been hospitalized from the use of NSAIDS is 1 in 3190 and the chance of you dying from their use is [1 in 21, 267](#).

Check out this fantastic article '[The Dangers of Acetaminophen](#)' by Chris Kresser.







**BODY GENIUS®**  
INSTITUTE

## THE ULTIMATE HEADACHE & MIGRAINE RELIEF GUIDE



**PART II: NATURAL**

**HEADACHE REMEDIES**

[WWW.BODYGENIUS.COM.AU](http://WWW.BODYGENIUS.COM.AU)

[#YOURBODYOURGENIUS](https://www.instagram.com/yourbodyourgenius)







In this section of the book we will explore natural headache remedies that you can apply within your own home.

As holistic practitioners, we have always seen marked improvements when individuals make appropriate dietary changes. These changes are a revival of ancient principles, ones that have been lost in modern cultures.

Food acts as a foundation medicine. Although it's sometimes slower to take effect, it more profoundly affects all systems of the body. If diet is used correctly for health and healing, other medicines and treatments are required less, or not at all.

This does not mean, of course, that dietary changes are all that is ever required. Certainly, other therapies such as homeopathy, healing touch (chiropractic care, physiotherapy, massage therapy), acupuncture, and herbology, are far more effective when based on a solid dietary foundation.

We believe that 'food consciousness' is a vital component of any healing therapy protocol and substantially increases the likelihood of a successful outcome.

*Food acts as a foundation medicine.  
Although it is sometimes slower to take  
effect, it more profoundly affects all  
systems of the body.*

# Food Consciousness

A growing number of individuals acknowledge the value of unrefined, organic, [non-genetically modified food](#) for a variety of health and healing reasons, and yet rarely purchase it, even when the facts about quality and benefits are clearly known.

We trust that the information presented in Part 1 and Part 2 of this book will convince you of the importance of a whole food diet for health and healing.

In the coming pages, we will also revisit the ['Foundation Principles'](#) of health and once again consider how important they are for both maintaining optimal health as well as for healing from injury, ill-health or disease.

All too often, people turn to 'quick fixes' to overcome unwanted symptoms. This may include:

- Using Antacids for indigestion
- Turning to coffee (with added sugar) when feeling weak and tired
- Smoking for momentary sedation
- Having liposuction and/or Lap Bands to 'solve' Obesity
- Turning to alcohol to reduce stress
- Using over-the-counter pain killers for headaches and migraines

The question arises as to whether these habits simply smother the symptoms while ignoring the real issues behind what is triggering the symptom in the first place. While at the time this may seem to be an easy solution, in the long-term these symptoms often become more pronounced as the underlying disease or pathological process progresses.

- PHYSICAL
- EMOTIONAL
- SPIRITUAL
- PSYCHOLOGICAL

Dietary changes, lifestyle modification and natural remedies may require greater effort on your part, along with more time before proving effective, however these strategies build the foundations for future health and vitality. Likewise, you can be confident that this natural and holistic approach will not wreak havoc on your body like the majority of over-the-counter and prescription medications do.

Part 2 of this book is aimed at self-help and looks to point you, the reader, in the right direction as to where to begin. Reviewing your scores from the questionnaires in Part 1 of the book will certainly provide some strong insights into lifestyle factors that may

be contributing to your headache symptoms.

This section of the book (Natural Headache Remedies) is broken up into two sections – Part A and Part B. The solutions presented in Part A are best undertaken when you're not experiencing a headache or going through a migraine episode. These solutions are often slower to take effect and therefore may not provide the immediate relief you're after. With that said, Part A solutions profoundly affect all systems of the body and provide the foundations for optimal health and healing, while enhancing the treatment outcomes of all other forms of therapy.

Part B solutions can often have dramatic effects within a short period of time and therefore can be used when symptoms are coming on and/or once symptoms are well-established. If these solutions are unsuccessful in resolving your symptoms then you're best advised to seek consult with a [Pain and Dysfunction practitioner](#) at The Body Genius Institute.

Please recognize that an extensive discussion on each of the topics is outside the scope of this book. However, we have provided additional resources for you to explore to enhance your knowledge and understanding of the given topic. Where possible, evidence has been provided for each of these solutions.

For some individuals, creating their own solution may seem daunting or confusing. Knowing where to begin can sometimes be a bit tricky and a 'helping hand' to point you in the right direction would seem like a breath of fresh air. In these cases, simply give the Body Genius team a call on (08) 9227 6277 and book in a free 10-minute phone call with one of our Integrative Health Practitioners (IHP) or Pain and Dysfunction Practitioners. Our holistic practitioners can listen to your story and provide some much-needed guidance.

#### **DISCLAIMER:**

This section of the book is not intended to provide medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. If your symptoms persist, consult your medical doctor for advice..



# Natural Headache Remedies

Part A = Building the foundations

## FOUNDATION PRINCIPLES OF HEALTH

- Foundation Principles of Health
- Organic Whole Foods
- Adequate Hydration
- Quality sleep patterns
- Active Lifestyle
- Mental Health
- Spiritual Health
- Emotional Health
- Optimal Breathing Patterns

Anyone who has travelled throughout the world and experienced different cultures will know that values can change from one region to the next.

## CULTURAL VALUES

The commonly held standards of what is acceptable or unacceptable, important or unimportant, right or wrong, workable or unworkable, etc., in a community or society.

For example,

- Chewing gum in Luxembourg, Switzerland and France is seen as

vulgar, while in Singapore it has been illegal since 1992.

- In many part of the Middle East and Africa, men hold hands as a sign of friendship and trust.
- In Taiwan and China, it's a sign of politeness to burp in public. When you belch out loudly you're actually complimenting the chef.
- In North America giving someone the 'thumbs up' means "ok" or "it's all good". While in Germany the thumbs up is the equivalent of giving them the finger. In Turkey, you would be calling someone a homosexual.
- People in Nepal, Bangladesh, India and Pakistan eat meals with their hands and do not normally use forks and spoons. This would be seen as rude in many Western cultures.
- People in North America eat hamburgers with their hands, while in Norway most people eat hamburgers with a knife and fork.
- Countries like Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand and Korea have similar ways of eating. Rice and soup are their common foods and they use chopsticks and spoons to eat their food. Yet in many Western cultures, cutlery is used at most meals.

Despite all these differences in cultural values around the world, one thing that remains a constant, regardless of which country you're in, are the Foundation Principles of health.

*"Values may drive our behaviour; however, principles drive the consequences of behaviour."*

*- Stephen R. Covey*

The Foundation Principles of health are just that, principles. And must be abided by all people regardless of their cultural values or religious beliefs. When these principles are ignored or 'bent' a little, the systems of our body get out-of-balance and symptoms arise.

You may remember from Part 1 that 23 out of 40 causative factors listed (55%), were in direct violation of one of the foundation principles of health. Here are just a few examples.



## CAUSATIVE FACTORS

CAUSATIVE FACTORS	FOUNDATION PRINCIPLE VIOLATION
Stress	Mental, emotional, spiritual health
Dietary Factors	Organic whole foods
Dehydration	Adequate hydration
Nitrates, MSG, Aspartame, Sucralose	Organic whole foods
Poor sleeping patterns	Quality sleep patterns
Changes in sleep, travel	Quality sleep patterns
Fatigue, exhaustion	Sleep, mental, emotional, spiritual health
Nutritional Deficiencies	Organic whole foods

Someone may argue that their shift work keeps them up at night or that they have to travel for work. These are both examples of a cultural value that governs the individual's behaviour. Although the person's values may drive their behaviour, it's the foundation principles that drive the consequences of that behaviour.

- Shift work predisposes employees to coronary heart disease, gastrointestinal disturbances, increased risk of breast cancer and poor pregnancy outcomes. [\(54\)](#)
- A 2015 study found that woman who work on rotating night shifts for more than five years are 11% more likely to have an early death. And that woman who work for more than 15 years on rotating night shifts have a 38% higher risk of dying from heart disease. [\(55\)](#)

Someone may not value the importance of a whole food diet or adequate hydration. These values may lead them to drink coffee, tea or alcohol instead of water, and eat processed foods instead of whole foods. But once again, the foundation principles of health will dictate the outcomes of this behaviour.

- Chronic diseases and all-cause mortality may be reduced through diet and other lifestyle factors. [\(56\)](#) [\(57\)](#)
- Can the values of Western Cultures

have a negative impact on Eastern Cultures? Japan's diabetic culture soared to a record high in 2017. [\(58\)](#)

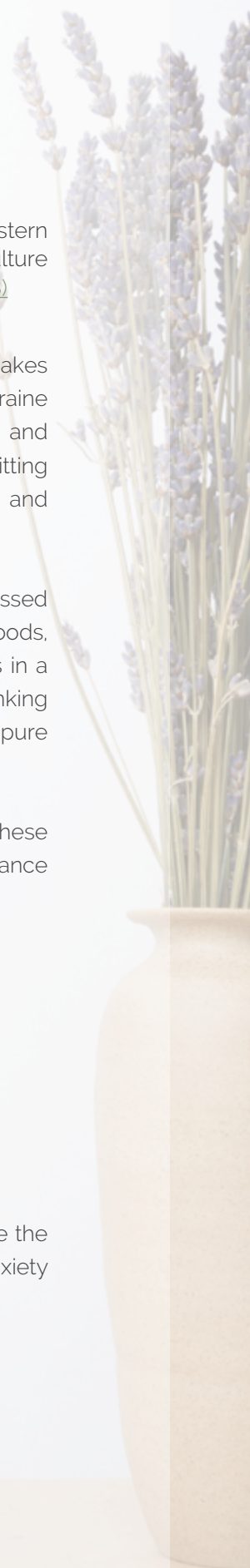
With these examples in mind, it only makes sense that all headache and migraine sufferers should perform an honest and open critic of how well they're committing to the foundation principles of health and restore balance where appropriate.

This may include phasing out processed foods in favour of organic whole foods, going for a walk for one hundred days in a row, starting an art class, or simply drinking less coffee and tea in favour of more pure water.

Did you know that placing one of these plants in your bedroom at night can enhance your quality of sleep?

- Peace Lilly
- Snake Plant
- Lavender
- English Ivy
- Aloe Vera

These plants can purify the air, increase the oxygen content, decrease stress and anxiety while improving sleep. [\(59\)](#)



## RESOURCES

- [Nutrition and Physical Degeneration](#) by Weston A. Price
- [How to Eat, Move, and Be Healthy](#) by Paul Chek
- [Farmacist Desk Reference](#) by Don Tolman
- [www.chriskresser.com](http://www.chriskresser.com) (Books, courses, podcast)
- [Farmageddon](#) (Documentary)

A sliced Carrot looks like the human eye. The pupil, iris and radiating lines look just like the human eye. Science now shows carrots greatly enhance blood flow to and function of the eyes.



## MAINTAIN A WHOLE FOOD DIET

Four (4) out of the top ten (10) diseases that kill humans are caused directly by what we put in our mouths. The last 50 years has seen a rapid decline in the quality of the foods being produced, while the level of processing these foods go through and the number of harmful additives and preservatives added have increased significantly. As a consequence, we have seen a significant increase in the number of people afflicted with ill-health and disease.

Eating a whole food diet is a fantastic place to start for over-coming ill-health and disease and for maintaining optimal health and vitality.

Figs are full of seeds & hang in two's when they grow. Figs increase the mobility of male sperm, increase the numbers of sperm as well as helping to overcome male sterility.



Grapes hang in a cluster that has the same shape as the heart. Each grape looks like a blood cell and all of the research today shows grapes are profound heart and blood vitalising food.



You may remember from Part 1 of this book that 12 out of the 40 causative factors listed for headaches would be eliminated simply by following a whole food diet. That represents a whopping 30%! When we considered the 'commonly reported food triggers' as listed on the [American Migraine Foundation](#) website, we once again found that 11 out of 15 of the reported triggers would be eliminated by following a whole food diet.

This makes a whole food diet one of the most cost-effective treatments for reducing or eliminating your symptoms.



A Walnut looks like a little brain, a left and

right hemisphere, upper cerebrums and lower cerebellums. Even the wrinkles or folds on the nut are just like the neo-cortex. We now know walnuts help develop more than three (3) dozen neuron-transmitters for brain function.

## WHOLE FOOD DIET

- Eat 'ethically' grown and raised food
- Eat locally grown and raised foods
- Eat only foods that are in-season
- Purchase organic, free-range, biodynamic foods

## RESOURCES

- [The Omnivores Dilemma](#) by Michael Pollan
- [Healing with Whole Foods](#) by Paul Pitchford
- [The Dirt Facts](#) by Paul Chek (DVD)
- [Food Inc.](#) (Documentary)
- [Nutrition and Physical Degeneration](#) by Weston A. Price
- [The Pottenger's Cats Study](#) by Francis Marion Pottenger
- [Supersize Me](#) (Documentary)
- [Bite Size](#) (Documentary)

## DIETARY FACTORS – FOOD SENSITIVITIES – FOOD ALLERGIES

A search of the medical literature in PubMed using the search terms "migraine" and "food allergies" provides more than 100 different studies. Although a detailed discussion on this subject is well outside the scope of this book, there are several key points that are worth mentioning.

The top headache/migraine-inducing foods include:

- Wheat Dairy
- Yeast
- Eggs
- Grain cereals
- Corn
- Citrus fruits
- Cane Sugar
- Removing all processed foods (whole food diet) will ensure that exposure to food colourings, artificial flavours, artificial sweeteners, and other additives will be avoided.
- Note: Even 'gluten-free' grains have been reported as a possible trigger in some studies.
- As you can see from the above list, there are still some whole foods that may

cause symptoms in some headache/migraine sufferers. ([Food Sensitivities](#))

A study in the Lancet found that, "The commonest foods causing reactions were wheat (78 percent), orange (65 percent), eggs (45 percent), tea and coffee (40 percent each), chocolate and milk (37 percent) each, beef (35 percent), and corn, cane sugar, and yeast (33 percent each). When an average of 10 common foods were avoided there was a dramatic fall in the number of headaches per month, 85 percent of patients becoming headache-free." ([60](#))

- Wheat Oranges
- Eggs
- Tea/Coffee
- Milk
- Chocolate
- Beef
- Corn
- Cane sugar
- Yeast

If a (whole) food sensitivity is suspected, a skilled [Integrative Health Practitioner](#) can discuss with you the best ways for determining which food(s) you're reacting to

and how best to create a food plan to avoid them.

- [Elimination Diet](#)
- [IgE testing](#)
- [Oral food challenges](#)
- Note: IgG testing is unreliable. For skin prick tests, [50-60% of tests give false positives](#).

It has also been suggested in the literature that avoiding foods rich in tyramine and histamines can also have a strong positive effect on reducing or eliminating symptoms in some migraine and headache sufferers.

Note: Not all studies support these findings suggesting that tyramine and histamine may not be triggers for all sufferers.

- [Tyramine](#)
- [Histamine](#)



Tyramine is produced in foods from the natural breakdown of the amino acid tyrosine. Tyramine is not added to foods. Tyramine levels increase in foods when they are aged, fermented, stored for long periods of time, or are not fresh.

The following groups of people may benefit from these guidelines:

- Migraine sufferers
- People suffering from headaches
- People who suffer from sinusitis or allergies
- People suffering from autoimmune conditions

FOOD GROUP	ALLOWED	USE WITH CAUTION	AVOID
Meat, Fish, Poultry, Eggs	All fresh produce is allowed; All frozen produce is allowed	Any products with nitrates/nitrites added; careful of left overs stored more than 1-2 days	Fermented sausages, pepperoni, salami, summer sausage. Careful of poorly stored products.
Bread, cereal, pasta	Zero	Zero	ALL
Dairy	Whole milk/fresh cheese		Aged Cheeses
Vegetables	All, except	Raw Onion	Beans, legumes, sauerkraut, soy
Fruits	All, except	Limit intake of citrus fruits to ½ cup per day; orange, grapefruit, tangerine, pineapple, lemon, lime	No dried fruit No fruit juices
Beverages	Water, herbal tea, coconut water	Less than 200mg of caffeine per day	Alcohol Excess caffeine
Other	Zero	No sugar. Avoid chocolate.	No additives such as MSG, aspartame, etc
Fats, Oils, Spices	All, except	No vegetable oils, no processed oils, no vinegar, no roasted nuts.	No yeast, no marmite, or vegemite.



## Foods rich in histamine

Histamine is a 'vasoactive amine' which causes dilatation of the blood vessels (flushing, rash, itching) and increases mucus production (runny nose, productive cough), and bronchoconstriction (wheezing, cough). Because histamine is contained in almost all body tissues, especially the lungs, nose, sinuses, skin, intestinal mucosa and certain blood cells (mast cells, basophils) it can cause a wide variety of symptoms. The release of histamine can be caused by almost any allergen. The most common are ragweed, pollen, dust mite, dander, penicillin, aspirin, stinging insect venoms, eggs, wheat, milk, seafood, alcohol.

Mackerel, Fish	Cheeses	<b>Alcohol (Beer, wine)</b>
Mushrooms	Cider	Anchovies
<b>Processed meats</b>	All dried fruits	Avocados
Sardines	Eggplant	Smoked fish
Sour milk	Sour cream, sour milk	<b>Pumpernickel bread</b>
Dairy/Yogurt	<b>Coffee cakes</b>	<b>All breads</b>
Tomatoes	Spinach	Vinegar
<b>Salad dressings</b>	<b>Mayonnaise</b>	<b>Ketchup</b>
Paprika	Chili	<b>Chili sauce</b>
Pickled beets	Pickles	Relishes
Bananas	Olives	<b>Chocolate</b>
Shellfish	Eggs	Papayas
Sauerkraut	Pineapple	Strawberries
All Fermented foods	<b>Soy Sauce</b>	<b>Bacon (nitrates)</b>

- All bolded items would not be a part of a whole food diet.



Determining whether food sensitivities are contributing to your headaches/migraines may prove to be a challenging process. A food journal that logs all the foods you eat and beverages you consume in addition to documenting when you experience symptoms can assist you in recognising patterns and trigger foods. A skilled Integrative Health Practitioner (IHP) can support you in this process and increase the likelihood of a successful outcome.

## RESOURCES

- [Fed Up](#) (Fully) by Sue Dengate
- [‘Are Food Sensitivity Tests Accurate’](#) by Chris Kresser
- [An Emerging Epidemic: Food Allergies In America](#)
- [American Migraine Foundation](#)
- [Food Allergy Research and Education](#)
- <http://undergroundwellness.com/podcasts/318-the-food-babe-way/>

## REMOVE GLUTEN

Although this really belongs under the ‘Food Sensitivity’ category previously discussed, we have made ‘Remove Gluten’ its own separate category based on the amount of media attention it has received in the last few years and some of the misinformation that is often disseminated.

*Celiac Disease is an auto-immune disorder primarily affecting the small intestine that occurs in people who genetically predisposed. The symptoms occur as a reaction to the consumption of gluten and gluten-containing foods.*

*Gluten sensitivity has been coined to describe those individuals who cannot tolerate gluten and experience symptoms similar to those with celiac disease yet lack the same antibodies and intestinal damage as seen in celiac disease.*

When people with gluten sensitivity eat gluten-containing foods, it can lead to a host of symptoms including headaches. According to the [National Foundation for Celiac Awareness](#), patients who have undiagnosed celiac disease and migraine headaches often see either complete resolution of migraine headaches, or a significant reduction in frequency and intensity of symptoms after gluten is given up.

A 2003 study in the Journal of Gastroenterology found that a significant proportion of patients with migraines may have celiac disease. And furthermore, that a gluten-free diet may lead to an improvement in the symptoms of these patients. [\(68\)](#)

Although you may not have celiac disease, a sensitivity to gluten can also lead to various symptoms including headaches. By eliminating gluten from your diet for just three weeks, you can determine to what extent gluten is contributing to your headache symptoms. Once you have been 100% gluten-free for three weeks, then introduce gluten-containing foods back into your diet. Pay close attention to the way you feel, any symptoms that may arise, and gauge your general sense of well-being. In most cases the answer is obvious.

## KEY POINTS

- Gluten is the name given to the protein in wheat, barley, rye and oats that affects people with celiac disease.
- It's essential that you go 100% gluten-free for the full three weeks if your aim is to determine the extent to which gluten is contributing to your migraines/headaches. Cheat days and cheat meals during this 21 days makes this food challenge difficult to interpret. Even a single bite of pizza can have a (negative) impact on your immune system for many weeks or months if you are gluten-sensitive. (61)
- Don't fall into the 'gluten-free' trap. All of these foods are processed and violate the 'whole food' guidelines discussed previously. Gluten-free breads, cereals, pasta, and crackers are often so heavily processed that they offer little nutritional

value. Not to mention the harmful additives and preservatives they may contain. The best part of eating a whole food diet is that your exposure to gluten is already significantly reduced.

- The practitioners at the Body Genius Institute have discovered through extensive clinical experience, that even non-gluten-containing grains can cause a wide range of symptoms (including headaches) in susceptible individuals.

## RESOURCES

- <https://chriskresser.com/still-think-gluten-sensitivity-isnt-real/>
- <http://thedr.com/>
- <http://undergroundwellness.com/podcasts/gluten-talk/>
- <https://www.glutenfreesociety.org/dr-fasano-on-leaky-gut-syndrome-and-gluten-sensitivity/>

## HYDRATION

It has been recognised by the literature that mild dehydration impairs cognitive function and overall mood. (11) Although the scientific evidence for mild dehydration as a causative factor for migraine headaches is not strong, it's generally accepted as a consistent trigger for many headache sufferers. (62) (12)

Hydrating your body is a cost effective, non-invasive and low-risk intervention that may reduce or prevent headaches and migraines. As such, it only makes sense that this Foundation Principle of health be considered as a top priority when seeking out treatment options.

You may notice that a positive side-effect of increased water consumption is an overall reduction in the amount of tea, coffee, alcohol and other 'unfriendly' liquids you consume each day. This change of habit can only have a strong positive effect on your overall health.

Remember that you can stay hydrated by consuming certain fruits and vegetables consistently throughout the day. Some of these fruits and vegetables have a water content that's over 90 percent!

- Cucumbers
- Celery
- Radishes
- Green Capsicum
- Cabbage
- Zucchini
- Cauliflower
- Eggplant
- Spinach

- Watermelon
- Strawberries
- Grapefruit
- Rockmelon
- Oranges
- Kale
- Broccoli

Although you should stay hydrated consistently throughout the day, the feeling that a headache or migraine is coming on may be your body's signal that you're becoming dehydrated. Simply pouring yourself a glass of water and sipping it consistently over the next 30 minutes may alleviate your symptoms and prevent a much stronger attack.

#### NOTE:

Drink enough pure water throughout the day to keep your urine clear.

#### RESOURCES

- [Your Body's Many Cries For Water](#) By F. Batmanghelidj

## MEDICATIONS

In Part 1 of this book, we described how all five (5) of the most commonly prescribed drugs have headache as one of their main side effects. If you are taking over-the-counter or prescribed medications and suffer from migraines or headaches, book a consult with your doctor to discuss the possibility that the medications themselves may be contributing to your symptoms.

## BREATHING, RELAXATION, GENTLE MOVEMENT

With most of us leading hectic, fast-paced lifestyles, we often place a significant amount of stress on the systems of our body. It's often this prolonged stress that can have a detrimental effect on our physiology resulting in changes such as altered breathing patterns, weak or sluggish digestion, changes in posture, hormonal imbalances and psycho-emotional-spiritual (PES) distress.

So, it's not surprising that all of these factors were listed in Part 1 as potential contributors to headaches and migraines.

- [Breathing](#)
- [Posture](#)
- [Stress](#)
- [Hormonal](#)
- [PES](#)

With this in mind, it would only make sense that activities such as Tai Chi, Qigong, meditation, postural correction, gentle stretching, yoga, breathing exercises, rest and relaxation, may help to abate the symptoms of a headache or migraine.

A 2007 study examined whether a traditional low-impact mind-body exercise, Tai Chi, affects health-related quality-of-life and headaches in an adult population suffering from tension-type headaches. The study found that a 15-week intervention of Tai Chi practice was effective in reducing headache impact and also effective in improving perceptions of some aspects of physical and mental health. [\(63\)](#)

A 2017 in the British Medical Journal concluded that the available evidence suggests that traditional Chinese medicine including acupuncture, massage, yoga, biofeedback, and meditation have a positive effect on migraine and tension headaches. [\(64\)](#)

A 2016 study revealed that mindfulness practice can promote effective heart rate regulation, and thereby promote effective recovery after a stressful event for individuals with headache conditions. [\(65\)](#)

A 2009 pilot study determined that the Japanese practice of Qigong was effective in providing a measurable improvement in the symptoms of chronic migraine sufferers. [\(66\)](#)

A 2010 study from the Journal of Neurology concluded that "There are several conditions where the evidence for mind-body therapies is quite strong such as migraine headache." [\(67\)](#)

To learn how to relax and move through your headache or migraine, you need to become familiar with your own breathing patterns and change them in ways that will help you to relax. When we are anxious, stressed, or in pain, we tend to hold our breath which changes our normal physiology and may exacerbate our symptoms.

There are many ways in which you can enhance your breathing patterns, improve your posture, alleviate psycho-emotional stress, and 'quiet your mind'.

By watching these YouTube videos, you can become acquainted with some of the more popular mind-body healing therapies.

- [Tai Chi](#)
- [Qigong](#)
- [Meditation](#)
- [Breathing](#)
- [Yoga](#)
- [Tibetan Healing Sounds](#)
- [The ELDOA](#)
- [MBSR](#)

MBSR = Mindfulness-based stress reduction

## ELIMINATE TOXIC CHEMICALS

There is now extensive evidence to show that we are being exposed to a greater number of chemicals than ever before.

Consider these articles:

- [Dangerous Chemicals Hiding In Everyday Products](#)
- [Toxic Chemicals Are Hiding In Your House Dust](#)
- [The Challenge: Chemicals In Today's Society](#)
- [The Hidden Dangers of Make-Up and Shampoo](#)

In Part 1 we presented you with a 'Chemical Exposure Questionnaire' to help you to determine the extent to which your exposure to chemicals at work and/or home may be contributing to your headache/migraine symptoms. If you have not yet completed this questionnaire, we would recommend you go ahead and do so now.

To reduce your exposure to potential toxic chemicals, we would recommend you follow a systematic process for changing over your products. Want an easy checklist to follow with recommendations for natural

alternatives? Simply click on the link below.

Excellent (Australian) Checklist  
[Maxie Mama Non-Toxic Living List](#)

## RESOURCES

- [MaxieMama](#) (Blog)
- [Project TENDR](#)
- [Environment Working Group](#)
- [Think Dirty](#)
- [Super Natural Home](#): Improve Your Health, Home, and Planet--One Room at a Time
- [Toxic Free](#): How to Protect Your Health and Home from the Chemicals That Are Making You Sick

sufferers, that we felt obligated to mention again.

Ideally, you'll begin to sip water immediately upon experiencing the symptoms of a headache. This should continue for several hours even if the symptoms are not resolving. Clinically, we have noticed that reversing dehydration, even mild-dehydration, can take days or even weeks, depending on the individual.

Be persistent with your water intake even if this simple strategy isn't the entire solution. It likely represents an important piece of the puzzle.

Consuming water should be a part of all your headache solutions.

## PART B - NATURAL HEADACHE REMEDIES

The goal of this section is to provide you with a list of 'natural headache remedies' that have been shown to offer significant relief for sufferers. Unlike Part A, these solutions typically begin to work in a relatively short period of time.

### DRINK WATER

Yes, this remedy was mentioned in Part A, however it's such a cost-effective, non-invasive, low-risk intervention that has such a high success rate for headache/migraine

## MAGNESIUM

[Magnesium](#) has proven to be one of the most successful headache remedies, primarily because such a large percentage of the population is deficient in this critical mineral. People who suffer from serious headaches/migraines often have low levels of magnesium, and several studies suggest that taking magnesium may reduce the frequency of migraine attacks in people who are deficient.

Magnesium deficiency (depletion) in healthy individuals can be caused by:



- Low magnesium diets, processed foods, soft drinks, processed salt, coffee
- (In our experience, a magnesium-deficient diet is the norm, not the exception)
- Calcium supplements
- Prescription and over the counter medications ([see example list](#))
- (Acid blockers such as Nexium, antacids such as Mylanta, antibiotics such as Amoxil, antiviral agents such as Rescriptor, cholesterol medication such as Crestor and blood pressure medication such as Enalapril)

There are numerous studies that have found that magnesium levels were low during a migraine attack and therefore it has been proposed that low brain magnesium is an important factor in the mechanism behind a migraine attack. ([70](#)) ([71](#)) ([72](#))

Is magnesium supplementation part of the solution to your ongoing headaches/migraines?

Taking 200 to 600 mg of magnesium per day may reduce the frequency of your migraine/headache attacks. ([73](#)) ([74](#)) ([75](#)) ([76](#)) Both oral and intravenous magnesium are widely available, extremely safe and cost-effective.

There are also certain medical conditions that can increase the likelihood of a deficiency:

- Alcohol consumption
- Aging, illness and stress
- Digestive and Genetic disorders
- Surgery, burns, liver disease, diabetes, hormonal imbalances
- Kidney disease, cardiac and neurological manifestations ([69](#))

Magnesium can be used safely by women who are pregnant however pregnant woman should consult with their health-care provider before self-administering. The most frequent side effect of magnesium is diarrhea, but lowering your dose or taking it less often can eliminate this issue.

Prevention is the ultimate cure! Remember to stay focused on high-magnesium foods in your diet.

There are many ways in which you can test for [magnesium deficiency](#) and these include serum, red blood cell, Ionic, Exa Test, Loading/Tolerance Test and hair mineral analysis.

- Legumes
- Pumpkin seeds
- Almonds
- Broccoli

- Squash
- Spinach
- Swiss chard
- Black beans
- Avocado
- Dried figs
- kefir
- Banana

## PEPPERMINT AND LAVENDER ESSENTIAL OIL

The calming, cooling and numbing effects of both peppermint and lavender oils make them perfect tools for finding headache relief.

### PEPPERMINT OIL

Native to Europe, peppermint is one of the oldest herbs used for medicinal purposes historically. Peppermint essential oil is a natural antibacterial, antiviral, anti-fungal, anti-parasitic and analgesic (pain reliever).



Used by cultures all over the world for its powerful medicinal properties, peppermint oil is now being proven to be clinically effective in the treatment of some medical conditions. Research shows that peppermint oil stimulates a significant increase in skin blood flow through the forehead, and it soothes muscle contractions. One study demonstrated that a combination of peppermint oil, eucalyptus oil and ethanol can have a muscle-relaxing and mentally relaxing effects.

A significant analgesic effect with a reduction in sensitivity to headache was produced by the combination of peppermint oil and ethanol. [\(77\)](#)

### LAVENDER OIL

The health benefits of lavender oil include its ability to eliminate nervous tension, relieve pain, disinfect the scalp and skin, enhance blood circulation, and treat respiratory problems.

The Latin name for lavender is Lavare, which means "to wash", due to its particularly pleasant aroma. Due to its medicinal properties, lavender oil is commonly used as a mood stabiliser and sedative. Research has shown that the use of lavender oil is a safe and effective treatment for migraine headaches. One study conducted in 2012 measured the results of inhaling lavender oil

for 15 minutes and found that lavender oil was an effective and safe treatment for the acute management of migraine headaches. Out of the 129 headache attacks, 92 responded favourably to the lavender oil remedy. [\(78\)](#)

Both essential oils have proven to be highly-effective headache remedies, so take advantage of their benefits.



## HOW TO USE

- Place a few drops of lavender and peppermint essential oils in a diffuser and lie down quietly while inhaling deeply through the nose for 15-20 minutes.
- Alternatively, [blend both oils](#) into a carrier oil such as coconut oil and then rub the blend on your forehead, temples and the back of your neck. Breathe deeply, and if possible, find a quiet place to relax and sip some cool water.

## HERBS: FEVERFEW AND BUTTERBUR

Headaches and migraines can be relieved naturally through the use of tension-easing herbs.

### FEVERFEW

Feverfew (*Tanacetum parthenium*) is a plant that is native to Asia Minor and the Balkans, but is now common throughout the world. Feverfew leaves are normally dried for medicinal purposes such as for the prevention and treatment of migraine headaches, fever, irregular menstrual periods, arthritis, psoriasis, allergies, asthma, ringing in the ears (tinnitus), dizziness, nausea and vomiting.



There is also some evidence for its use in conditions such as anaemia, cancer, common cold, earaches, liver disease, prevention of miscarriage, muscular tension, bone disorders, swollen feet, diarrhoea, upset stomach and intestinal gas.

### HOW DOES IT WORK?

In relation to headaches/migraines, feverfew leaves contain many different chemicals, including one called [parthenolide](#). It's believed that parthenolide may decrease factors in the body that cause migraine headaches.

Research shows that consuming feverfew reduces the frequency of migraine headaches and headache symptoms, including pain, nausea, vomiting, and sensitivity to light and noise.

A systematic review (2000), completed by The School of Postgraduate Medicine and Health Science, U.K, compared the results of six studies. The researchers concluded that feverfew is effective in the prevention of migraine headaches and doesn't pose any major safety concerns. [\(79\)](#)

A second systemic review of the literature in 2011, concluded that feverfew showed significant analgesic, anti-inflammatory and antipyretic activities, which confirmed the folk use of feverfew herb for the treatment of migraine headache, fever, common cold, and arthritis. [\(80\)](#)

If you're interested in trying this natural remedy, it's easy to find and purchase feverfew products. Feverfew supplements are available fresh, freeze-dried or dried.

Feverfew can be purchased as capsules, tablets or liquid extracts.

The recommend dose for headache relief is typically between 100 and 125mg of feverfew extract. [\(80\)](#) However, follow the directions as labelled on the product or as directed by your health-care professional.

### **BUTTERBUR**

Butterbur is a shrub that grows in Europe and parts of Asia and North America, typically in wet, marshy ground. The name, butterbur, is attributed to the traditional use of its large leaves to wrap butter in warm weather. Throughout the centuries, butterbur has been used to treat the plague and fever, while more recently it has been used medicinally for treating urinary tract symptoms, stomach upset, headaches including migraines, allergic rhinitis (hay fever), and other conditions.

A 2004 study, which was performed over a four-month period, demonstrated that migraine attack frequency was reduced by 48 percent in participants who consumed 75 milligrams of Petasites extract (butterbur) twice per day. The proportion of patients with a greater than 50% reduction in attack frequency after 4 months was 68%. [\(81\)](#)

## SUPPORTIVE LITERATURE

- Migraine Prevention in children and adolescents [\(82\)](#)
- Placebo-controlled trial for the prevention of migraine [\(83\)](#)
- Usefulness of nutraceuticals in migraine prophylaxis [\(84\)](#)
- Butterbur root extract is effective in the prophylaxis of migraines. Results of a randomised; double-blind trial [\(85\)](#)

The growing amount of scientific evidence to support butterbur's use in the prevention and treatment of headaches/migraines makes it a viable, cost-effective, low-risk alternative to medications.

Commercial butterbur products that contain extracts from the root, rhizome (underground stem), or leaves of the plant are available. Look for brands of extract that are labelled PA-free, which ensures that it was safely processed to remove potentially harmful, toxic chemicals found naturally in the plant.

The usual adult dosage is 50-100mg twice daily. Use as directed on the label of the product or consult with a healthcare provider before use.

## CAUTION

Raw, unprocessed butterbur products, such

as teas, should not be used because they contain harmful substances.

## GINGER ROOT

Ginger, a commonly-used cooking spice, has been used for at least 2,000 years as a natural remedy for nausea, diarrhoea, upset stomach and to aid digestion. It has also been used to treat headaches, including migraines, and the symptoms associated with these conditions such as nausea and vomiting.

In 2014, a double-blinded, randomised,



clinical trial compared the efficacy of ginger to Sumatriptan, also known as Imitrex, in the treatment of migraine headaches.

100 patients who had an acute migraine

without aura were randomly allocated to receive either ginger powder or sumatriptan. Time of headache onset, its severity, the time interval from headache beginning to taking drug and patient self-estimation about the response for five subsequent migraine attacks were recorded by patients.

Researchers concluded that the effectiveness of ginger powder in the treatment of common migraine attacks is statistically comparable to sumatriptan. Ginger also poses a better side effect profile than sumatriptan.

#### **SUMATRIPTAN SIDE EFFECTS:**

Dizziness, feeling like throwing up, feeling warm, irritation of the inside of the nose, numbness and tingling, taste problems, temporary redness of the face and neck, vomiting, drowsiness, chest pain, chest tightness, difficulty swallowing, formation of dead tissue in the spleen, high blood pressure, heart attack ...

#### **HOW TO USE**

- Use ginger root extract, 250mg 1-2 times per day or as directed
- Sip on a [freshly made ginger tea](#) (fresh ginger root)

#### **CAUTION**

You should not take ginger or other supplements without first consulting your doctor. Ginger may have a blood-thinning effect, and if you take blood thinners or have a blood disorder, this may increase your risk for bleeding. Taking ginger powder on an empty stomach may cause stomach upset.

#### **CELERY/CELERY SEED OIL**

More and more these days it seems that medical science is proving the validity of old folk remedies. One of the latest examples is celery, an ancient herbal remedy that traditionally has been used to benefit the stomach, spleen, and pancreas while calming an aggravated liver.

It has also been known to improve digestion, purify the blood, improve conditions such as vertigo and nervousness while promoting sweating. If that list isn't extensive enough it has also been used for eye inflammations, burning urine, blood in the urine, acne,





canker sores and to cool internal heat in the liver and stomach, which often contributes to headaches.

More recently, modern research has been proving the benefits of celery in overcoming hypertension (high blood pressure), gout and rheumatism. [\(86\)](#)

Sedanolid is a natural phthalide occurring in edible umbelliferous plants such as celery. Celery seed oil, a significant source of sedanolid, is used as a herbal remedy to treat inflammatory-associated conditions such as gout and rheumatism.

Celery helps you to relax and be less anxious, which may help with pain. It is also rich in potassium which many headache sufferers are deficient in.

## HOW TO USE

- Celery seeds can be used in smoothies, juices or soups. Taking 60ml of celery juice and then laying down for 30 minutes has proven to be an effective remedy for headaches.
- Celery juice combined with a little lemon juice is a remedy for the common cold when fever is more prominent than chills. This combination is also helpful in headaches caused by high blood pressure or by heat conditions. Consume 2-4 cups of juice per day.
- To apply topically, dilute one drop of

[celery seed essential oil](#) into a carrier oil. Apply to the forehead, temples and base of the head.

- Aromatic. Place drops in a diffuser and diffuse celery seed essential oil for up to one hour, three times per day.

## CAUTION

Keep celery seed oil out of reach of children. If you are pregnant, nursing, taking medication, or have a medical condition, consult a health-care practitioner prior to use.

## CORIANDER SEEDS (CORIANDRUM SATIVUM)

For more than an estimated 7,000 years, people around the world have been using coriander seeds for their healing properties. Coriander has long been praised for its ability to treat ailments that ranged from allergies to diabetes and migraines.

Traditional [Ayurvedic](#) medicine used coriander to relieve sinus pressure and headaches by pouring hot water over the fresh seeds and inhaling the steam.

Research on the seed's medicinal effects has primarily focused on its potential to treat arthritis and diabetes. Certainly, more studies need to be conducted to confirm its usefulness as a remedy for headache/

migraine symptoms. However, coriander seed's strong anti-inflammatory potential may prove beneficial for many headache sufferers.

### HOW TO USE

- Put the coriander seeds into a small bowl. Pour boiling water on top of them, drape a towel over your head and the bowl, and inhale the steam.



- Coriander seeds can be chewed and used in food or teas.
- Add one spoonful of coriander seed powder to one cup of water. Leave the powder overnight and drink the mixture the next morning on an empty stomach.
- Oral extracts are also available however we would recommend consulting with an Ayurvedic expert before use.

### HOT AND COLD PACKS

Always a 'hot' topic as to which is most

effective, it seems that while one solution solves headaches for one person, it can flare them up for another. There's evidence to support both hot and cold compress treatments, and it all has to do with the muscles and blood vessels. Head pain occurs because of activation or irritation of structures that sense pain: skin, bone or neck joints, sinuses, blood vessels or muscles.

In our experience, some headaches respond more favourably to cold while other headaches (such as those caused by tension and anxiety) tend to respond better to heat. You'll have to play around to see if you're someone who benefits from cold/cool treatment or hot/warm, while some people find alternating between the two works best.

One 2013 study found that wrapping two freezable ice packs around the neck – one on each side of the neck – targeting the carotid arteries, at the onset of migraine symptoms significantly reduced pain in participants. The study found that the maximum benefit was observed at the 30-minute mark. [\(87\)](#) [\(88\)](#)

### HOW TO USE

- We have found that a wheat pack heated in the microwave is most effective for heat treatments.
- For cold therapy, we have found that a damp tea towel, place in the freezer for 10-15 minutes offers the perfect amount

of cold therapy. It's most effective if you have a second damp towel in the freezer ready to go when the first towel you are using warms up.

- These therapies should be applied for no less than 20-minutes, and the research suggests that maximum benefit is achieved at approximately the 30-minute mark.

### CAUTION

Excessive cold or heat can cause damage to the skin and may in fact make your symptoms worse. It's always best to error on the side of not enough heat or cold than to begin treatment with strong heat or cold. Wrapping both hot and cold packs in a towel can dampen their effects.

### DISCLAIMER:

This section of the book is not intended to provide medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. If your symptoms persist, consult your medical doctor for advice.

In Part 3 of this book, we will take a closer look at cervicogenic and tension-type headaches (TTH), their causative factors, and why certain people may require the professional expertise of a holistic practitioner to overcome their headache/migraine symptoms.

- Chiropractic Care
- Physiotherapy
- Acupuncture
- Dry Needling

## CERVICOGENIC HEADACHE

is a type of headache characterised by chronic hemicranial pain referred to the head from either the cervical spine or soft tissues within the neck.

## TENSION TYPE HEADACHE

Tension headache, also known as tension-type headache, is the most common type of primary headache. The pain can radiate from the lower back of the head, the neck, eyes, or other muscle groups in the body typically affecting both sides of the head. Tension-type headaches account for nearly 90% of all headaches.

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## THE ULTIMATE HEADACHE & MIGRAINE RELIEF GUIDE



**PART III: HOLISTIC PRACTITIONERS**

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In this section of the book we will look at Tension-Type Headaches and Cervicogenic Headaches and the role of '[Pain and Dysfunction](#)' practitioners in helping patients to overcome their symptoms.

## TENSION-TYPE HEADACHES (TTH)

The tension-type headache (TTH) is the most common headache disorder in the world. Recent studies have suggested that the mean global prevalence of TTH in adults at 42%. ([89](#)) Assuming that these statistics are accurate for Australia, it would suggest that seven (7) million Australians are likely to have tension-type headaches.

- Absenteeism from work or school Disability
- Reduced quality of life
- Personal suffering
- Lowered quality of family life
- Financial costs to society
- Reduced social capacity
- Reduced work capacity

Not only is a headache painful, but it is also disabling. In the Global Burden of Disease Study, updated in 2015, headache disorders collectively were third highest. ([90](#))

## SYMPTOMS

- Often described as pain that feels like a tight band around the head or a weight on top of it.
- The neck and shoulders may also hurt along with the headache.
- Tautness and tenderness of the scalp, neck and shoulder muscles.
- Dull and persistent pain that can vary in intensity (mild, moderate, severe)



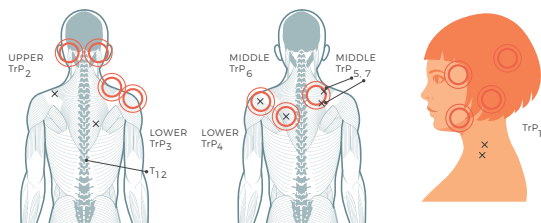
- Often accompanied by aching in the back or over the left side of the chest
- In severe attacks, there may be mild sensitivity to light and noise
- Nausea and indigestion may accompany the pain
- The sufferer may have difficulty concentrating and sleeping
- Neck movements (active or passive) are often restricted by muscular stiffness and discomfort
- Depression and anxiety are common in chronic sufferers
- The pain can last from 30-minutes to several days or become chronic/continuous

What are the differences between tension-type headache and migraine?

There are many differences between these two types of headaches and the table below will attempt to summarize those differences.

TENSION-TYPE HEADACHE	MIGRAINE
Occurs without warning	Occurs after warning signs with aura
Pain more likely to be all-over the head	Pain more likely to be one-sided
No throbbing	Sufferer often experiences throbbing
No nausea	Nausea and/or vomiting
No light or noise sensitivity	Light and/or noise sensitivity
No visual disturbances	Visual disturbances
Rarely starts during sleep	Not uncommon to start during sleep

These are the typical symptoms of these disorders as represented by our clinical experience and as presented in the scientific literature. However, they may not apply to all TTH and migraine sufferers.



## TTH AND MIGRAINE TRIGGERS

Part 1 of this book provides an extensive look at the potential triggers for both of these types of headaches.

## CERVICOGENIC HEADACHE

If your headache is related to a problem in your neck or the surrounding musculoskeletal structures, then there is a good chance it's a cervicogenic headache.

Cervicogenic headache (CH) is a chronic headache that arises from structures of the neck and is perceived in one or more regions of the head and/or face. This type of headache occurs due to a neck disorder or lesion: Bony, disc and/or soft tissue elements. There are numerous pain sensitive structures that exist in the cervical (neck) and occipital (back of the head) regions. The junction of the skull and cervical (neck) vertebrae have regions that are pain generating, including the joints, ligaments, cervical nerve roots, and vertebral arteries.

By definition, a cervicogenic headache (CH) must be accompanied by evidence of a disorder or lesion within the cervical spine or soft tissues of the neck, known to be able to cause headache.

## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Patients with CH often have reduced range of motion of their neck and worsening of their headache with certain movements of their neck or when specific pressure is applied to certain spots on their neck.

- The headaches are often one-sided
- Steady pain that doesn't throb
- Pain may radiate from the neck/back of head up and over to the front of the head or behind the eye
- The headache may not be associated with neck pain
- Head pain increases when the patient coughs, sneezes or takes a deep breath
- Symptoms may last for hours or days
- Stiff neck. Often difficult to move the head in certain directions
- CH can share some of the same symptoms as a migraine: Feeling sick to your stomach, vomiting, pain in the arm or shoulder, sensitivity to light or noise, and blurry vision.

## CAUSES

- Dysfunctions or lesions in the cervical spine (neck)
- Prolonged periods of working at a computer
- Poor posture – forward head position
- Trauma suffered from a fall, sports injury or whiplash
- Pathological conditions such as osteoporosis or degenerative disc disease
- Trigger Points in the musculature of the neck or surrounding tissues

## WHO IS SUSCEPTIBLE?

- Typically, people in careers that require prolonged periods in a sustained position. These jobs may promote a forward head position that increases the loading on the structures of the neck and surrounding musculoskeletal structures.
- Hair stylists, truck drivers, jobs requiring prolonged periods of computer-based work, receptionists, manual jobs that require sustained neck flexion and/or heavy lifting.

## PAIN-SENSITIVE STRUCTURES AND THE ROLE OF PRACTITIONERS

As you can well imagine, the first step in the process to overcoming your headache symptoms is to gain an accurate diagnosis as to the causative factors involved in your individual case. Having completed Part 1 of this book and reading the introduction to this section, you can gain some perspective on how challenging it can be for practitioners to determine the unique causes of a patient's headaches.

This highlights the need for headaches sufferers to consult with a ['holistic' practitioner](#) who has the overall knowledge, experience, and the systems in place to allow for an accurate diagnosis. The Body Genius Institute (holistic) practitioners are highly-experienced in assessing all eleven (11) systems of the human body while considering a patient's mental, emotional, spiritual and physical health. Of course, this gives them the greatest likelihood of finding the underlying causative factors for your headaches. Holistic practitioners have the ability to accurately assess all of the potential underlying factors, including:

- Lifestyle factors such as psycho-emotional stress.
- Fatigue and/or exhaustion.

- Poor quality sleeping patterns, shift work, and travel.
- Dehydration.
- Poor posture and mechanical overloading of the head, neck and jaw.
- Dietary factors such as deficiencies, food sensitivities, and food additives.
- Underlying health issues such as constipation, IBS, allergies, and poor gut health.
- Hormonal issues
- Medications and drug interactions
- Environmental causes
- Household hazards
- Structural issues such as spinal subluxations, trigger points, and neural issues.
- Dental Issues

Once the underlying causative factor(s) are identified, the holistic practitioner can then determine the best treatment protocol and whether they can solve the problem.

# Case Study

Jason was a 29-year-old general labourer who enjoyed surfing and running as his main forms of fitness. Jason presented to the Body Genius Institute complaining of left-sided neck pain, and severe headaches that started at the base of his skull and radiated through his temples and behind his eyes.

Jason had received previous treatment from chiropractors, physiotherapists, dentists and massage therapists. Treatment offered temporary relief but symptoms always returned in 1-3 weeks once treatment stopped.

## Clinical Findings

- The Body Genius 'Intake Forms' captured some very important information about Jason's health history: Chronic Sinusitis, fungal infections, significant dental work over the years, low quality diet, dehydration, high-level of perceived stress and previous musculoskeletal injuries.
- Listening and watching Jason breathe, the Body Genius practitioner could clearly see that Jason was a 'mouth-breather' and struggled to breathe through his nose. More advanced testing confirmed he could only breath through one nostril.
- Significant forward head position.
- Clicking and crunching in the left side of the jaw (TMJ) when opening and closing the mouth. Significant loss of range in the TMJ, chronic muscular tightness.
- Reduced ability to flex the neck and rotate to the left
- Reduced ability to rotate neck to the left – 50% reduction in range.

## Treatment Protocol

A specialized type of scan called a CBCT ([Cone Beam Computed Tomography](#)) was ordered to accurately diagnosis Jason's temporomandibular joints (TMJ/Jaw) along with evaluating his sinuses, nerve canals and nasal cavity.

The results of this scan demonstrated clearly that Jason had 100% occlusion (blockage) his in left nasal passage and nearly 70% occlusion on the right side.

This level of occlusion on both sides significantly limited Jason's ability to breathe through his nose and contributed to forward head posture, which was adopted so that he could optimise his ability to breathe through his mouth. Unfortunately, this forward head position has several detrimental effects:

- A normal head weighs 4.5kg and with every 2.5 cm forward translation of the head, the load borne by the neck and the shoulders doubles. [\(Q1\)](#)
- It's well documented that mouth breathing adults are more likely to experience sleep disordered breathing, fatigue, decreased productivity and poorer quality of life than those who nasal-breathe. [\(Q2\)](#) [\(Q3\)](#)
- There are numerous studies that link forward head posture and temporomandibular joint (Jaw) disorders. [\(Q4\)](#)

The results of the CBCT scan clearly demonstrated why previous attempts at correcting Jason's forward head posture by other therapists was futile. In the proper head position, Jason found it difficult to breath and naturally reverted back to his 'bad posture.' Without first clearing the nasal passages, there was limited capacity to make any significant postural changes.

As you can imagine, the first protocol was to determine why there was occlusion of the nasal passages (obstruction versus congestion) and then find the best method for clearing these passages. Fortunately for Jason, the main challenge to overcome was congestion and this could be achieved non-surgically through dietary changes, fungal cleansing, and natural supplementation. This portion of the treatment protocol was completed by one of the Body Genius Institute '[Integrative Health Practitioners](#)'.

A repeat CBCT scan taken five (5) months later demonstrated significant improvements in both of Jason's nasal passages.

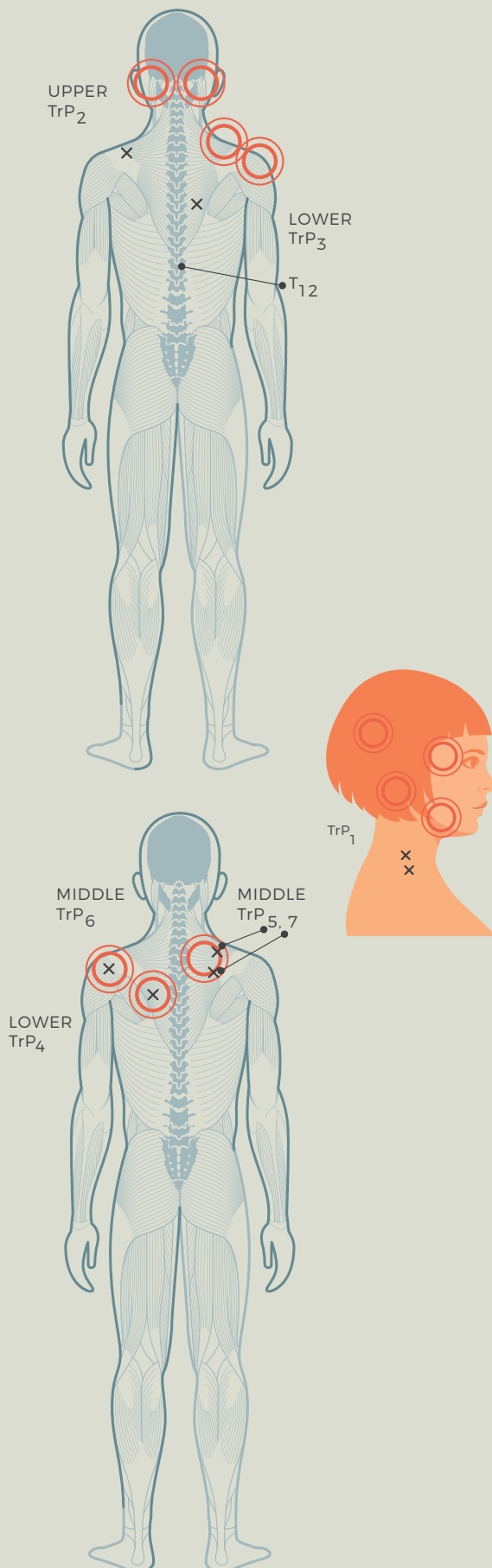
The treatment protocol at this point then switched to:

- Restoring proper breathing patterns
- Restoring proper functioning of the jaw (temporomandibular joints)
- Restoring normal posture



- Spinal adjustments to restore balance to the cervical, thoracic, and lumbar segments of the spinal column
- Dry needling to alleviate active trigger points.
- Implementing corrective exercises to maintain these treatment effects and maintain balance in Jason's body
- A 'Tune-Up' session with his Body Genius 'Pain and Dysfunction' practitioner every 6-8 weeks to alleviate the accumulation of strain from daily work activities and sport.

Despite having experienced headaches on and off for nearly six (6) years, Jason's headaches resolved completely and full neck range of motion was restored.



So, what are some of the more common 'Pain Sensitive Structures' that contribute to headaches and neck pain?

### POSSIBLE NEURO-MUSCULOSKELETAL PAIN GENERATORS

- Central nervous system
- Joint cartilage/Joints
- Peripheral nerves
- Vertebrae (Bones)
- Spinal discs
- Ligaments
- Tendons
- Nerve Roots
- Vertebral Arteries
- Facet Joints
- Atlanto-occipital joint
- Muscle Trigger Points
- Muscle Fascia
- Spinal Subluxations
- Temporomandibular Joint
- Postural overloading of these tissues. Acute trauma. Chronic 'wear & tear'. Disease.

One of the roles of the skilled (Holistic) 'Pain and Dysfunction' practitioner is to identify the 'pain generator' for each individual client and then to utilize their expertise and skills to treat the offending structure(s) and alleviate the patient's symptoms.

PAIN GENERATOR = The structures and/or psycho-emotional factors causing the symptoms

Let's take a closer look at two of the more common 'pain generators' of headaches.

## SPINAL SUBLUXATION

This is a term applied to a vertebra which has lost its normal position and/or motion in relation to the vertebrae above or below.

It's important to differentiate between how the medical profession uses the word subluxation and how it would be used in a clinical setting by chiropractors, osteopaths or physiotherapists.

Vertebrae, which do not function properly within the spinal framework, generate mechanical stress. This may accelerate the 'wear and tear' on the surrounding spinal muscles, ligaments, discs, joints and other spinal tissues. This may lead to pain, inflammation, reduced spinal mobility, muscle spasm and increased muscle tone.

The medical use of the word subluxation may have different meanings depending on the medical specialty involved. It implies the presence of an incomplete or partial dislocation of a joint or organ. Most people would be familiar with the term subluxation in relation to the acromioclavicular joint (AC Joint), glenohumeral joint (shoulder) or a rib. This is the medical use of the term subluxation.

Versus

The World Health Organization (WHO) definition of vertebral subluxation is: "A lesion or dysfunction in a joint or motion segment in which alignment, movement integrity and/or physiological function are altered, although contact between joint surfaces remains intact."

This is an important differentiation because an x-ray and other types of scans may not demonstrate the presence of a subluxation. However, the body perceives that this positional fault is present and sends 'unhappy' messages to the brain. This may lead to pain, inflammation, movement dysfunction or undesirable changes both at a local level (the point at which the subluxation exists) AND in other structures within the body which may be located (anatomically) away from the location of the subluxation.

These symptoms may present as muscle spasm, trigger points, tight fascia, joint instability, reduced movement and/or pain, such as in the case of a headache.

So, let's be clear on what this means. A positional fault of one vertebra on another (subluxation) may have both local effects and more general effects as well. Treatment of that subluxed joint through manipulation (adjustment) can have both local effects and also a general effect (at remote anatomical sites).

The most up to date research demonstrates that adjustment to a subluxed spinal segment can not only improve pain, muscle spasm and movement at that particular location, it may also reduce pain, muscles spasm and improve movement in other regions of the spine AND quite possibly at peripheral joints such as ankles, knees, hips, shoulders and elbows. [\(95\)](#) [\(96\)](#)

## MUSCULAR TRIGGER POINTS

Trigger points are commonly described as 'trigger sites' or 'muscle knots'. These points are hyperirritable spots in skeletal muscle that are associated with taut bands of muscle fibers. Activation of trigger points may be caused by a number of factors including:

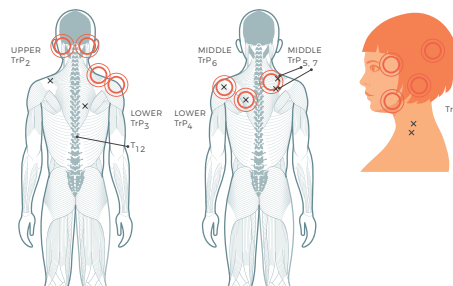
- Acute overload – Heavy lifting or quick

acceleration during sport

- Chronic overload – Long hours sitting at computers or training for sport
- Activation by other trigger points – Chest triggers can set off shoulder triggers
- Direct trauma – An opponent's knee striking your thigh muscle
- Spinal problems – Nerve dysfunction can lead to trigger points in the muscles
- Deficiencies – Vitamin and mineral deficiencies and/or dehydration
- Toxic overload – Toxicity within organs or glands

These taut bands (trigger points) are a common, yet often overlooked, cause of pain.

Did you know that the pain at the base of your head or behind your eyes could be coming from trigger points in the muscles of the neck or shoulders?



## ACUPUNCTURE (DRY NEEDLING) THE WHOLE-BODY ASSESSMENT

Dry needling is a treatment approach that has evolved from traditional acupuncture. It refers to the insertion of a fine needle into the muscles and connective tissues of the body to deactivate trigger points.

Dry needling helps to release these taunt bands and to deactivate the trigger points, which in turn alleviates pain. Dry needling also alleviates muscle tension, increases range of movement around a joint (s), and improves circulation to a given area resulting in a greater healing response.

Dry needling is very effective as it can deactivate trigger points that are deep within the muscles (1-10cm). These trigger points can be very difficult to reach with deep tissue massage. Likewise, dry needling is very successful at deactivating chronic trigger points that 'won't let go' with massage therapy.

A 2017 study concluded that "The application of dry needling into trigger points of suboccipital and upper trapezius muscles induces significant improvement of headache index, trigger points tenderness, functional rating index and range of motion in patients with cervicogenic headache." ([97](#))

This form of therapy is highly specialized & requires years of training & practice.

At the Body Genius Institute, our 'Pain and Dysfunction' practitioners perform a head-to-toe evaluation of each and every patient regardless of whether they are suffering from an ankle sprain, hip pain or headache.

You may be questioning why a head-to-toe screen is required when you're suffering from a headache or migraine.

As kids, we were all taught the song "Dem Bones" which was about how interconnected the body was. It went something like this:

Toe bone connected to the foot bone  
Foot bone connected to the heel bone  
Heel bone connected to the ankle bone  
Ankle bone connected to the shin bone  
Shin bone connected to the knee bone ...

Modern medicine breaks the human body down into 11 systems such as the cardiovascular system, endocrine system, respiratory system, digestive system, musculoskeletal system, neurological system, etc. And there is then a doctor who specialises in the assessment and treatment of that individual system, such as:

- Cardiologist (Heart and blood vessels)
- Gastroenterologist (Digestive organs – stomach, pancreas, liver, gallbladder)

- Dermatologists (Skin, hair, nails)
- Endocrinologists (Hormones and metabolism)

Having read through Part 1 and 2 of this book you're now quite familiar with how interconnected these 11 systems of the body are and that disease, inflammation and/or dysfunction in one system can have a significant impact on the proper functioning of the other systems.

The same thing can be said for the interconnectedness of the neurological, muscular, and skeletal systems of the body. The whole body is connected, both anatomically and [neuro-physiologically](#).

For this reason, it's important that your 'Pain and Dysfunction' practitioner perform a head-to-toe analysis of your entire body to determine all of the factors that may be contributing to your symptoms and driving the 'pain generator'.

- Neuro-dynamic testing (Neurological System) (Nerves)
- Manual Muscle Testing (Neurological System) (Nerves)
- Palpation of every major muscle in the body (Muscular system) (Soft tissues)
- Range of motion testing at every joint in the body (Neurological, skeletal

system)

- Length testing for all major muscles (Neurological, skeletal, muscular systems)
- Assessment of breathing patterns (Neurological, respiratory systems)
- Gait analysis (Neurological, skeletal, muscular systems)
- Postural Assessment (Neurological, respiratory, skeletal, muscular systems)

It's through this method of detailed analysis that the True Cause of the problem is found.

## ONGOING THOUGHTS

So, at this point we have determined that you're suffering from headaches. The skilled holistic practitioner has performed an extensive analysis of all the potential causative factors and outlined a 'best approach' treatment plan that can be implemented and accurately evaluated for its level of success.

The 'Pain and Dysfunction' practitioner is confident that your 'pain generator' is coming from a source that they can directly influence through hands-on therapy, supplementation, postural correction, breathing exercises, meditation, education or another form of therapy that is within their skill-set.



So, at this point you may be wondering what kinds of treatment may be used to treat you for your headaches and whether there is any scientific evidence to support these forms of therapy.

The 'Pain and Dysfunction' practitioner is confident that your 'pain generator' is coming from a source that they can directly influence through hands-on therapy, supplementation, postural correction, breathing exercises, meditation, education or another form of therapy that is within their skill-set.

So, at this point you may be wondering what kinds of treatment may be used to treat you for your headaches and whether there is any scientific evidence to support these forms of therapy.

## TREATMENT

The best form of therapy for your headaches will be determined by the findings of the analysis process. Each patient will require an individualized treatment plan that is based firmly on the most important findings from both the subjective evaluation (Intake Forms) and clinical (objective) markers.

It's through this detailed analysis process that best practices can be implemented and careful evaluation of the level of success can be made.

A patient who is highly-stressed and demonstrates neurological 'wind-up' may respond really well to the internal arts such as Tai Chi, Qigong, Meditation, Yoga, and Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction.



A patient who sits at a desk for 45 hours per week may benefit substantially from postural correctives, breathing exercises, dry needling, and regular yoga practice.

A patient who is highly-stressed, exercises intensely, and has active trigger points, may respond well to dry needling.



A patient who has developed spinal subluxations at various levels of the spine, may benefit from spinal adjustments along with education about how to prevent reoccurrences.



The key to successfully alleviating the patient's symptoms and preventing reoccurrences, is to first perform a detailed subjective and objective analysis and to accurately diagnosis the problem. Only then can an effective treatment plan be implemented.

*There is no 'one-size fits all' treatment for headaches!*

Repeatedly 'adjusting' a subluxed spinal segment will not alleviate the patient's symptoms if that joint subluxation is not the pain-generator.

Continuously dry needling trigger points will not alleviate the patient's symptoms if those trigger points are not generating their symptoms.

Symptoms may return if all the contributing factors are not addressed and preventative

measures put in place.

Symptoms may return despite accurate assessment (neuro-musculoskeletal) and precise treatment if 'triggering' factors in the other eight (8) systems of the body are not addressed. This may include poor quality sleep, dehydration, food sensitivities, food additives, gastrointestinal illness and high stress levels affecting the neurological and endocrine systems.

# Case Study

Louise was a 27-year-old mother of two beautiful children – Courtney 4-years-old and Ayria who was just 18 months. Louise had been struggling with severe tension-type headaches (TTH) for nearly one year before coming to the Body Genius Institute for consultation.

Louise's Intake Forms revealed that she was lacking in sleep, often felt fatigued, had low energy levels, and was drinking 2-3 cups of coffee per day. Her dental information revealed that she had gum disease, was grinding her teeth at night, and often woke up with a headache in the mornings.

A whole-body evaluation revealed the following pertinent information:

- Poor posture with forward head position
- Abdominal laxity
- Altered breathing patterns
- When opening her mouth, the jaw deviated to the right. There was a palpable click/clunk in the left temporomandibular (TMJ)(Jaw) joint. The muscles surrounding her jaw were tight and she found it difficult to completely open her mouth.
- Neck movements were decreased. Most pronounced was neck flexion plus left rotation.
- Thoracic rotation left and right was reduced by 50%
- Right hip movement was reduced overall and hamstring length on that side was only 100 degrees (normal is approximately 150 degrees or greater).
- Palpation of the spinal column revealed spinal subluxations at C1/2, C5/6, T4, T9, and L5. The right sacroiliac joint was also thoroughly assessed and had movement restrictions.
- On palpation of the muscular system, there was tightness and/or trigger points in the jaw muscles, deep neck extensors, upper trapezius, scalenii, forearms and right hip musculature.

## TREATMENT

The overall findings of the assessment were clearly explained to Louise and the proposed treatment plan was discussed. Louise had the opportunity to ask several questions and comment on what treatment options had been outlined.

Due to the severity of her neck pain and headache, treatment in the first two sessions was aimed at alleviating her symptoms. A spinal adjustment was performed at the C1, T4 and L5 levels to correct subluxations. Dry needling was performed to her upper trapezius muscles and deep neck muscles on the back. Heat therapy was applied post treatment.

Within two sessions, Louise's headaches had reduced by nearly 80% in both intensity and frequency.

It was determined that both stress and poor posture (forward head position) were contributing to altered breathing patterns, TMJ (jaw) dysfunction, spinal subluxations and muscular trigger points.

It was clear that spinal adjustments and dry needling (trigger point therapy) were only a small portion of the overall solution and that failure to address the 'true' cause of the problem would allow for a reoccurrence of symptoms at some point in the future.

## STRESS

- The underlying factors behind Louise's stress were identified and an action plan was put in place to slowly overcome them. This included gaining more support at home.
- To alleviate stress before going to bed, a range of strategies were implemented: Lavender plants were placed on her bedside tables, she began journaling before bed, and a breathing/meditation exercise was performed for five minutes.

## POSTURAL CORRECTION

- With two small kids at home, maintaining ideal posture throughout the day was always going to pose a challenge. The main goal was not to focus on continually holding or maintaining ideal posture, but rather restoring postural balance at intervals throughout the day.
- With limited time available during the course of the day, it was decided to combine a

postural exercise with a meditative and breathing exercise.

- The exercise could be performed 1-4 times per day for 3 to 6 minutes. Consistency was the key and Louise understood that there were no hard and fast rules, she could simply work it into her day.

#### TEMPOROMANDIBULAR JOINT (TMJ) (JAW)

- A detailed examination of the TMJ and surrounding structures was performed. A range of mobilisation techniques in combination with dry needling and fascial releasing were used to restore balance.
- Approximately two weeks after the commencement of treatment, Louise's jaw tightness had resolved and the left-sided clicking/clunking had disappeared. She now had normal range of mouth opening.

#### SPINAL SUBLUXATIONS AND MUSCULAR TRIGGER POINTS

- Spinal adjustments were used to correct the offending levels of the spine. With these treatments, the right sacroiliac joint (SIJ), hip range of motion, and right hamstring length were restored to normal.
- Dry needling was used in three (3) sessions to deactivate taut bands in a range of muscles.

#### ONGOING THERAPY

- Within three (3) weeks, Louise's headaches had reduced by more than 90% in both intensity and frequency. Louise was remaining consistent with all her strategies.
- A holistic dentist was consulted for a second opinion on her TMJ. He was happy with her progress and did not want to intervene in any way.
- Louise was referred to the Body Genius Integrative Health Practitioner (IHP) to address her sleep issues, low energy, and gut issues.
- 'Tune-Up' treatments were scheduled every three (3) weeks to prevent the accumulation of strain and to restore balance to her body. Within a few months these tune-ups were spread out to every six (6) weeks.
- Only 3 months after starting therapy, Louise was 100% headache free and managing independently.



## THE EVIDENCE

### CHIROPRACTIC AND PHYSIOTHERAPY

One of the best things about chiropractic and physiotherapy care is that it's a drug-free and surgery-free path to natural healing. They offer a wide-range of therapies that can help to relieve the stress in your system while providing expert advice on how to prevent reoccurrences.

### 'PAIN AND DYSFUNCTION' PRACTITIONER

This term is unique to the Body Genius Institute and represents a holistic practitioner that has taken the time to gain the knowledge, experience and skill set of multiple professions including chiropractic, physiotherapy, osteopathy, massage therapy, acupuncture and dry needling, functional movement training, nutrition, and supplementation.

There are numerous clinical trials indicating that spinal manipulation therapy (SMT) has significant benefits in alleviating the symptoms associated with headaches, including migraines.

### SPINAL MANIPULATION THERAPY

This is an intervention performed on spinal articulations which are synovial joints. There are literally hundreds of different adjustment (manipulation) techniques used by practitioners throughout the world. The common goal is to restore or enhance joint function, while resolving joint inflammation and reducing pain. Some approaches use some force (spinal adjustment), while others are more gentle (spinal mobilization).

A systematic review of the literature in 2001 concluded that SMT has a better effect than massage for cervicogenic headache and that the effect is comparable to commonly used 'first-line' prophylactic prescription medications for tension-type headache (TTH) and migraine headache. [\(98\)](#)

Examples of 'first-line' prophylactic medications for migraines include propranolol, timolol, amitriptyline, divalproex, sodium valproate, topiramate, gabapentin and naproxen sodium.

### SIDE EFFECTS OF GABAPENTIN

Side effects of gabapentin include increase in seizures, fever, body aches, chills, tremor, easy bruising, abnormal eye movements, dizziness, drowsiness, dry mouth, headache, stuffy nose, runny nose and sore throat.

## EXTREME SIDE EFFECTS

Extreme side effects of gabapentin can include suicidal thoughts, agitation, depression, hyperactivity, hostility or anxiousness. If you experience any of these side effects, get immediate medical attention.

## CHILDREN

In children, certain side effects of gabapentin are seen more frequently, such as behavioral changes, aggressiveness, restlessness, hostile behavior, memory problems and difficulty concentrating.

The results of this systematic review would suggest that SMT is equally effective in preventing tension-type headaches (TTH) and migraine headaches, but without the side effects of prophylactic drugs such as Gabapentin. These findings are supported by a 2011 research paper in the Journal of Headache and Pain. This systematic review of the literature found that massage therapy, physiotherapy, relaxation and spinal manipulative therapy is equally effective as propranolol and topiramate in the prophylactic management of migraine. [\(102\)](#)

Another study found similar results and concluded that some people report significant improvement in migraines after SMT. Notably, the study found that a high

percentage (>80%) of participants reported stress as a major factor for their migraines. [\(99\)](#)

These findings confirm the statements made previously regarding the (holistic) role of the Pain and Dysfunction practitioner – to not only alleviate the symptoms for the patient, but also to identify the underlying causative factors and mentor the patient in ways to prevent reoccurrences.

A 2016 research paper evaluated the efficacy of interventions used by physiotherapists for patients with headache and migraines. This systematic review and meta-analysis concluded that there was a statistically significant reduction in the intensity, frequency and duration of migraine, tension-type headache, and cervicogenic headache. [\(100\)](#)

Another systematic review and meta-analysis published in 2014 concluded that there is a high level of evidence that physiotherapy is effective for headache reduction. In addition, physiotherapy is low-cost, has no side-effects and potentially reduces medication use and work absenteeism. [\(101\)](#)

## ONGOING THOUGHTS

The evidence for a wide range of manual therapies is strong for the treatment of tension-type headaches, cervicogenic

headaches, and migraine headaches. These types of manual therapies may include spinal joint manipulation or mobilization, soft tissue interventions, therapeutic exercises and needling therapies.

The clinical experience of the Body Genius practitioners (100, 000+ hours) in addition to our extensive review of the scientific literature, would lead us to believe that the effectiveness of these interventions is dependent upon proper clinical reasoning since not all interventions are equally effective for all headache pain conditions. For instance, evidence for physical therapy in migraine is not as strong as the evidence for tension-type headache (TTH). The most likely reason for these findings are that the migraine [pathogenesis](#) (biological mechanism) is often multi-factorial, whereas the pathogenesis of TTH is more associated with neuro-musculoskeletal disorders.

You will remember that we discussed this point earlier when we stated that: "The 'Pain and Dysfunction' practitioner is confident that your 'pain generator' is coming from a source that they can directly influence through hands-on therapy, supplementation, postural correction, breathing exercises, meditation, education or another form of therapy that is within their skill-set."

For many migraine sufferers, the 'pain-generator' will fall outside of the skill-set of the treating 'Pain and Dysfunction'

practitioner. In other words, what is driving their pain or symptoms is NOT from the neuro-musculoskeletal systems and as such, no amount of manual therapy will help to alleviate the patient's symptoms.

This is where detailed screening systems are required, with the aim of selecting patient's whose symptoms are coming from the neuro-musculoskeletal system and then treating them accordingly. All other patients should be properly assessed by an [Integrative Health Practitioner](#) to diagnose the driving factors behind their symptoms.

Do you think that if this differentiation was made prior to placing subjects into clinical trials for treatment with manual therapy, the results would be even more significant?

## ACUPUNCTURE AND DRY NEEDLING

Acupuncture is another traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) treatment technique that originated in China about 2, 500 years ago and is used to treat a wide variety of diseases, including headaches and migraines.

[Acupuncture](#) seeks to balance the body's energy, or Qi, by stimulating specific points on the body. It has proven to provide relief from chronic disease and pain.

[Dry needling](#) is the use of solid filament

needles inserted through the skin and into the muscle to release painful myofascial trigger points. Dry Needling (DN) results in the deepest tissue release and allows for the desensitisation of supersensitive structures, restoration of movement and function, and to induce a healing response. It's called 'dry' needling because there is no solution injected into the patient's body as occurs with a hypodermic needle, such as during a cortisone shot. With dry needling, the needle itself and the effects it produces within the tissue is the treatment.

Dry needling has been around for decades and has gained its own status as a 'specialization' in the world of manual therapy. It takes many years of practice to perfect the 'art' of dry needling and to achieve world-class treatment outcomes. For highly-skilled practitioners, dry needling is extremely beneficial for quick and tangible results. When indicated, dry needling can produce results in as little as 1-2 treatment sessions.

Dry needling is completely different from Acupuncture in its methodology and application. Dry needling is a technique to treat the neuro-musculoskeletal systems based on pain patterns, muscular dysfunction, and other clinical signs and symptoms. Acupuncture is a technique for balancing the flow of energy known as Qi or Chi, believed to flow through meridians

(pathways) in your body.

So, the question is, can Acupuncture and Dry Needling be used effectively for headache conditions?

## ACUPUNCTURE

Cochrane performed a systematic review of the literature and concluded that the available evidence suggests that a course of acupuncture consisting of at least six treatment sessions can be a valuable option for people with frequent tension-type headaches. In this 2016 study, they reviewed 12 trials with 2349 adults. ([103](#))

A 2002 randomized controlled trial evaluated the effectiveness of acupuncture versus flunarizine in the prophylactic (prevention) treatment of migraines without aura. In this study, 160 women with migraines were randomly assigned to the acupuncture group (n=80) or to an oral therapy with flunarizine group (n=80). In the acupuncture group, treatments were carried out once per week for two months and then once per month for the next four months. The results demonstrated that frequency of attacks and the use of symptomatic drugs significantly decreased during treatment in both groups. The results also demonstrated that both the number of attacks and analgesic consumption was significantly lower in the acupuncture group. Pain intensity during an

attack was only reduced in the acupuncture group, not the drug therapy group. [\(104\)](#)

The findings of this study would suggest that acupuncture is at least equally effective as drugs in the prophylactic treatment of migraine sufferers, and may even be superior. [\(105\)](#) Given the side effects associated with the use of flunarizine, acupuncture seems to be a cost-effective, low-risk treatment option for migraine sufferers.

### **SIDE EFFECTS OF FLUNARIZINE**

Drowsiness, weight gain, nausea, heartburn, dry mouth or anxiety may occur as your body adjusts to the medication. If any of these effects continue or become bothersome, inform your doctor. Notify your doctor if you develop: a skin rash, depression, muscle aches, tremor, difficulty moving, abnormal or uncontrolled movements (especially of the face or mouth). If you notice other effects not listed above, contact your doctor or pharmacist.

Another study evaluated the effectiveness of acupuncture for treating acute attacks of migraine. In this randomized controlled trial (RCT), a total of 175 patients with migraine were randomized into three groups. Only the first group received acupuncture while the other two groups were treated with sham acupuncture points. The researchers in the study concluded that acupuncture treatment is more effective than sham acupuncture in

reducing the discomfort of acute migraine. They also stated that acupuncture is clearly effective in relieving pain and preventing migraine relapse or aggravation. [\(106\)](#)

There is no question that migraines can be a debilitating condition and chronic sufferers often discuss the psycho-emotional consequences and negative impact they can have on their quality of life. In reference to quality of life, a 2014 study concluded that acupuncture is a better treatment option than conventional drug therapy in not only relieving the pain of migraine but in also improving the psychological profile in sufferers. [\(107\)](#)

It must be pretty clear to our readers at this point, that acupuncture is equally effective (if not more effective) than conventional drug therapy in the prevention and treatment of headache/migraine sufferers, and without the risks associated with prescription medications.

### **DRY NEEDLING**

A 2017 study looked to compare the effects of superficial and deep dry needling into trigger points of the neck and shoulders in patients with cervicogenic headache (CG). The researchers concluded that the application of dry needling into trigger points of the neck and shoulder muscles induces significant improvement of the headache



index, trigger point tenderness, functional index, and range of motion in people with CG headache. They also found that deep dry needling had a greater effect on neck range of motion and function. (108)

In 2013, a systematic review and meta-analysis of the literature was performed. Twelve randomized controlled trials (RCT) were selected for review. The researchers concluded that based on the best current available evidence (grade A), they would recommend dry needling, compared to sham or placebo treatments, for decreasing pain and other symptoms in people suffering from myofascial pain syndrome. (109)

Another systematic review and meta-analysis in 2015 evaluated the effectiveness of dry needling for myofascial trigger points associated with neck and shoulder pain. Again, the researchers concluded that the evidence was strong for dry needling in relieving myofascial trigger point pain in the neck and shoulders. (110)

The rationale for applying dry needling in the treatment of headaches relates to the etiologic role of trigger points in these pain conditions. Trigger points are defined as hypersensitive tender spots located in a taut band of skeletal muscle that are painful on pressure (mechanical stimulation) and give rise to a referred pain. (111) There are several muscles that can refer pain to the

head mimicking headache: Upper trapezius, sternocleidomastoid, splenius capitis, occipitalis, frontalis, temporalis, and/or suboccipital muscles.

There is clear scientific evidence supporting the role of active trigger points in tension-type, migraine, and cervicogenic headache (112) although their relevance is slightly different depending on the headache disorder. For instance, trigger points are seemingly more related to tension-type headache than migraine. (113)

## ONGOING THOUGHTS

The evidence for both acupuncture and dry needling is strong for the treatment of tension-type headache, cervicogenic headache, and migraine headache. With that said, the clinical experience of the Body Genius practitioners (100, 000+ hours) in addition to our extensive review of the scientific literature, would lead us to believe that the effectiveness of these interventions is dependent upon proper clinical reasoning since not all interventions are equally effective for all headache pain conditions.

For instance, the evidence for dry needling in migraine is not as strong as the evidence for tension-type headache (TTH). The most likely reason for these findings are that the migraine [pathogenesis](#) (biological mechanism) is often multi-factorial, whereas

the pathogenesis of TTH is more associated with neuro-musculoskeletal disorders.

- No amount of dry needling will alleviate headache symptoms if active trigger points are not the 'pain generator'.
- Active trigger points, and the associated head pain, will return if triggering factors are not addressed: Lack of sleep, poor diet, poor posture, sustained postures, dehydration, and chronic intense stress.
- No amount of acupuncture will permanently alleviate headache symptoms if the perpetuating factors are not removed.

You can now see how important it is to consult with a highly-experienced 'Pain and Dysfunction' practitioner that has the knowledge, experience, skill-set, and systems of analysis in place to properly assess your unique set of contributing factors and to then structure an effective treatment protocol.



*Let's get back to loving life!*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The pain of a headache can make day-to-day life a miserable challenge and the 'common' headache is commonly overlooked or masked with painkillers like aspirin or Neurofen.

A World Health Organization (WHO) report stated that around 47% of adults worldwide will have experienced headache in the last year. (1) Tension headache is the most common type of primary headache with almost 90% of adults experiencing tension headache.

Some of the more common causes of headaches include heredity, stress and stressful life events, intense emotions, fatigue/exhaustion, poor sleeping patterns, lack of sleep, changes in sleep patterns, and travel, dehydration, dietary factors, additives and preservatives such as MSG, Aspartame and other artificial sweeteners, nitrates found in meats, and alcohol such as beer and red wine

In Part 1 of the book we took a closer look at some of the more important causes of headaches and investigated why they were so significant. We learned that out of the 40 trigger factors listed, 55% occurred when the person was in direct violation of the 'Foundation Principles' of health. We also considered the importance of dental history

in chronic headache sufferers, how trigger points may be contributing to symptoms, and the relevance of chemicals found in household products, personal care products and make-up.

In Part 2 we considered 'Natural Headache Remedies' that readers can apply within their own home. We spoke about how the food we eat acts as a foundation medicine and that although it's sometimes slower to take effect, it more profoundly affects all systems of the body. If diet is used correctly for health and healing, other medicines and treatments are required less, or not at all. As holistic practitioners, we always see marked improvements when individuals make appropriate dietary changes. These changes are a revival of ancient principles, ones that have been lost in modern cultures.

This does not mean, of course, that dietary changes are all that is ever required. However, other therapies such as homeopathy, healing touch (chiropractic care, physiotherapy, massage therapy), acupuncture, and herbology, are far more effective when based on a solid dietary foundation.

Other headache remedies such as drinking water, magnesium, peppermint and lavender oil, herbs such as feverfew and butterbur, ginger root, celery seed oil, coriander seeds, and hot and cold therapy, were also

discussed in detail.

The last section of the book (Part 3) presented the reader with a discussion on the role holistic practitioners play in the healing process for headache sufferers. More specifically, we took a closer look at tension-type headache and cervicogenic headache.

A detailed discussion of 'pain-sensitive' structures and finding the 'pain-generator' unique to each headache sufferer was undertaken. Detailed case studies were presented to highlight the role of a skilled Pain and Dysfunction practitioner and to portray to the reader the complexity behind the pathogenesis of some headaches.

To conclude this section of the book, we provide the reader with the scientific evidence in support of specific therapeutic treatments: Physiotherapy, Chiropractic care, Acupuncture and dry needling.

There is no 'one-size-fits-all' in the treatment of headaches, and the clinical experience of the Body Genius practitioners, in addition to our extensive review of the scientific literature, would lead us to believe that the effectiveness of these interventions is dependent upon proper clinical reasoning since not all interventions are equally effective for all headache pain conditions.

We've provided you with the path, take the first step!

We trust that this Book will provide you with the answers you're looking for. The practitioners at the Body Genius Institute have a combined 50+ years of experience in helping people just like you to overcome health challenges and regain their health, happiness and love of life.

Best Wishes,

*The Body Genius Team*



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