Headaches are one of the most common health concerns. At any one time 15% of the population is experiencing head pain.

**What kinds of headaches are there?**

More than 90% of headaches can be classified as tension-type, migraine or cervicogenic.

By far, most people get tension-type headaches and get them frequently. They typically suffer mild to moderate pain on both sides of the head, which is often described as tight, stiff, constricting – like having something wrapped around your head and pressing tightly.

Migraines are periodic severe, throbbing headaches that afflict far fewer people (and more women than men), usually hurt on one side of the head, can cause loss of appetite, nausea and even vomiting, and may involve a visual change called an aura. People experiencing them may prefer a dark room where they can lie down.

Cervicogenic headache is a musculo-skeletal form of tension-type headache (which may also be related to migraines). Many times, cervicogenic headache is due to nerve irritation and/or muscle spasm in the upper part of your neck. Chiropractors consider this the result of misalignments (subluxations). Subluxations interfere with the nervous system and may cause head pain in a number of ways. If the nerves that cover your head and scalp, which exit between the upper segments of your neck (spine), become irritated then headaches may result.

The response of your body to subluxations is to tighten muscles to protect and attempt to correct this malfunction. These muscles tighten locally, in the area of the subluxations and also up & down the length of your spine. If the muscles which attach into the base of your skull remain tight over a long period of time, waste products/toxins build up. This results in pain at the back of your head which, when severe, can be referred into the front of your head.

Your nervous system regulates the diameter of your blood vessels. Irritation to nerves, particularly from upper spinal subluxations, affects the blood vessels of your brain, and can result in migraine headaches.

**What should I be concerned about?**

If you are a headache sufferer, your obvious concern is to obtain safe, dependable relief. You should avoid making things worse by using drugs – even over-the-counter, nonprescription drugs – that can have serious side effects and dangerous interactions with
other medications or supplements you take. You should also be aware that many people experience what are termed "analgesic rebound headaches" from taking painkillers every day, or nearly every day. Watch out! The medicine you take to get rid of today’s headache may give you a headache tomorrow and the days after.

What can chiropractic do?

Chiropractors have had considerable success relieving the cause of headache pain and releasing headache sufferers from the dangerous vicious circle of taking ever-larger doses of ever-stronger painkillers that may even be causing new and worse headaches.

*Chiropractic adjustments have shown to be as effective and even more effective than medications in reducing the severity and frequency of headaches.*

Chiropractic is particularly successful dealing with cervicogenic headache. Even though cervicogenic and other tension-type headaches may not actually involve stress or muscle tension, chiropractic’s ability to adjust spinal abnormalities seems to lessen or remove the forces contributing to many individuals headache pain.

What does the research say?

- One study examined at how chiropractic care can help treat migraines. One hundred and twenty-seven (127) migraine patients (at least 1 migraine/month) were divided into two groups for comparison. Group 1 received chiropractic adjustments at specific vertebral subluxations determined by the treating practitioner, whilst group 2 served as controls and received inactive treatment (electrical stimulation with no current delivered). Subjects receiving chiropractic adjustments reported substantial improvements, reduced migraine frequency, duration, disability, and medication use following two months of treatment. One in five participants reported a 90% reduction in migraines, and half reported significant improvement with regards to migraine severity.

- Chiropractic spinal manipulation is a common alternative therapy, but its efficacy compared to standard medical treatment has not been determined. This randomized clinical trial involved 218 patients diagnosed with migraine. It measured the relative efficacy of spinal manipulation, amitriptyline, and therapy combining both of these treatment modalities for prophylaxis of migraine headache. Clinically important improvement was observed in patients receiving spinal manipulation alone (40%), amitriptyline alone (49%) and combined therapy (41%). But in the post-treatment follow-up period, a far higher percentage of patients who received only spinal manipulation experienced...
reduction of their headache index scores compared with those taking amitriptyline or who underwent the combined-therapy.  

This study showed chiropractic spinal manipulation for migraine headaches to be as effective as an established medical treatment modality (the drug amitriptyline); the results suggest that chiropractic therapy should be considered a viable treatment option for migraine headache sufferers.

Chiropractic care is natural. It removes interference to your body’s coordinating, feeling and healing ability. It may also benefit overall health and wellbeing through the promotion of a healthy, well functioning nervous system.

Chiropractic addresses the fundamental cause of poor health, not merely the resulting symptoms. It is an opportunity for you to grow increasingly healthy and vibrant.

Very few professions can demonstrate such a safe and effective approach to the relief of headaches, as well as other musculo-skeletal conditions.

If you have any further questions or queries about Chiropractic care, please do not hesitate to talk to Dr. Tass Amiridis at Green Door Chiropractic – phone 9859 0935.

Better health is open to you...
