



Make it go AWAY!

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Chiropractic Treatment of Migraines

Migraines are horrible! Just ask anyone who suffers from them. I have often heard patients with migraines say, "I don't care what I have to do, just make it GO AWAY!"

So how can you make a migraine go away? There are many options, some of which work, and others which don't. This newsletter's purpose is to inform the public that chiropractic treatment is not only an effective, viable, researched method of treating migraines, but it is also devoid of the side effects that sufferers experience with medication.

Traditionally, the medical profession has prescribed drugs to help with the symptoms of migraines. Examples include; Sumatriptan, ergotamine, caffeine, opiates, phenothiazines, and everyone's favorite, NSAIDS, or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (like aspirin). For symptom relief, these medications can be very effective for relieving migraine pain. They can work very well, as long as the sufferer continues to take them. However, as with any type of medication, there are side effects. A few include sedation, dry eyes, blurred vision, constipation, dizziness, burning and tingling sensations, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, muscle pain, and even heart attack and cardiovascular problems.

So what else is there? Several articles have been published in the literature demonstrating how the chiropractic adjustment can be a viable treatment for headaches. For example, in a recent issue of the *Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics*, a peer-reviewed journal, a six month study was performed on 123 people suffering from headaches. There was a treatment group, receiving chiropractic adjustments, and a control group receiving a placebo-type physical therapy. The study showed statistically significant improvement in migraine frequency, duration, disability, and medication use when compared to the control group. 22% of those receiving chiropractic treatment reported 90% reduction in migraines over the first 2 months. A further 49% reported significant improvement in the severity of each episode.

Through a controlled study, Parker et al. found that cervical (neck) manipulation is an effective tool for the treatment of migraine headaches. According to Bogduk, a renowned author and researcher, joint dysfunction of a vertebral segment in the neck may give rise to a neurological component causing headaches. He confirmed this by anesthetizing a nerve in the upper part of the neck of 10 subjects. Seven of which saw their headache subside

with the anesthesia.

Lastly, although there are many other examples, is a study done by Schoensee et al. He demonstrated that reduction in range of motion of the neck was very prevalent in migraine sufferers. Putting motion back into that segment, as with the chiropractic adjustment, reduces the irritation on the occipital nerve and decreases the headache.

The search of the literature on migraine is very interesting and informative. There are various types of headaches which have different underlying etiologies, and care must be given to determine the exact type of headache that the patient experiences. Here at the Cox Clinic of Chiropractic, we are trained to examine and determine the cause of such headaches, and treat them accordingly. Over 25% of our practice is dedicated to doing just that. We believe that no one should have to suffer if they don't have to, and we know that chiropractic is often the path to relief.

Adapted from:

1. Migraine Headaches: An Alternative approach for the Migraine Sufferer, by Goodman et al., from *Journal of the American Chiropractic Association*, March 1999.
2. A Randomized Controlled Trial of Chiropractic Spinal Manipulative Therapy for Migraine, by Tuchin et. al., *Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics*, February, 2000.