

The Courtyard Clinic

Physical
Health

Headaches



Osteopathy/Physiotherapy Sports & Remedial Massage

- Back, Neck & Shoulder pain
- Joint & Muscle Injuries
- Headaches
- Arthritis
- Rib Pain
- Sports Injuries

Podiatry/Chiropody

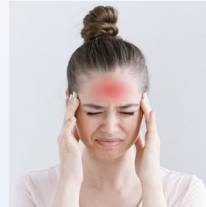
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Headaches are an issue that most of us will be familiar with. You don't meet many people that haven't suffered with a headache for one reason or another. For some they can be the occasional uncomfortable inconvenience, but for others they can be debilitating and life altering. Fortunately, for the sufferers, most types of headaches can be treated.



Headaches can be scary, debilitating, and associated with a lot of other strange and worrying symptoms. The good news is that most headaches aren't serious and can be treated with simple lifestyle changes such as rest, reducing stress, keeping hydrated and eating correctly. Manual therapies such as

Osteopathy, Physiotherapy and Massage Therapy can also be greatly beneficial for some types of headache.

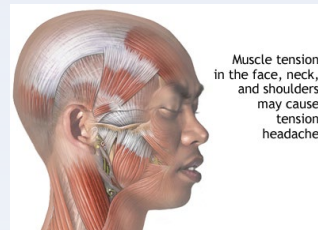
There are two classifications of headaches, primary (as listed below) and secondary, which are due to another underlying health problem. When patients attend the clinic with a headache we perform a thorough case history and testing to make sure there are no underlying conditions that need further medical attention. Most of the Headaches we deal with in the clinic are Primary type headaches which we are going to focus on in this article.

PRIMARY HEADACHES

Tension headaches

Tension headaches are the most common form of headache and are caused by muscular and fascia tension over the scalp and around the eyes. Common sites include the back of the skull where the muscles of the neck attach, the temple where muscles that move the jaw are located, and the forehead. It is thought that pain is caused when chronic tightness in these muscles causes them to tire and ache through fatigue, constant tension can also impair blood flow into the muscles and surrounding tissues, they can also irritate nerves around the face, jaw and scalp.

These headaches can be linked to deteriorating vision or incorrect prescription glasses, dehydration, stress and fatigue. Tension headaches may last anywhere from 15 minutes to a period of weeks or months. The pain is often described as a band-like tightness or pressure. It may be felt at the back of the head, upper neck, temples and around the eyes. Gentle stretching of the muscles, traction and articulation of the neck performed during manual treatment often helps to calm the symptoms.



Migraines

People describe migraines as an intense pounding or throbbing pain on one, or both sides of the head. They often occur with visual disturbances such as blurring, floaters and double or tunnel vision. In some cases they even cause temporary blindness. Tinnitus, facial pins and needles and muscular weakness can also be experienced. Figures suggest that around 15% women and 6% men are affected. Migraines are categorised as vascular headaches, which means that they are caused by disturbances in blood flow. Many patients notice strong smells and sounds trigger their migraines as well as certain foods and drinks, commonly red wine, coffee, chocolate and cheeses. Most people treat their migraines successfully with over-the-counter medication and avoiding sounds, smells and foods that aggravate them. If they're severe, however, you may need stronger migraine specific medication that is only available on prescription from a doctor. Many patients find that Migraine headaches can be relieved by treatment directed at the upper back and neck. There are some studies that have found that Acupuncture can be of great help with Migraines, which is something that we offer at The Courtyard Clinic.

Cluster headaches

Cluster headaches are less common than migraines and the exact cause is unknown. It is suspected to be of similar origin to migraine in that a dysfunction in the regulation of blood flow leads to symptoms. Pain is located around the eyes and temples and is usually one sided.

Cervicogenic Headaches

The term "Cervicogenic" relates to the fact that the pain experienced is due to a problem in the cervical portion of the spine (the neck). Cervicogenic headaches are caused by irritation of joints and muscles in the neck. When neck muscles spasm they can put pressure on nerves that travel to the head and radiate pain into the scalp. Joints in the top of the neck also share a nerve supply with the scalp and can cause pain



referral. A whiplash injury is a common cause of this type of headache. The classical symptom of a cervicogenic headache is pain that begins in the neck and progressively moves into the head. Those with the condition often experience a lowered tolerance of pain, making management of the pain sometimes difficult. Head and neck movement, rather than offering relief, can often make the headache worse. The neck usually becomes very tender to the touch upon the onset of the headache and responds very well to manual treatment.

The Courtyard Clinic - Osteopathy, Physiotherapy, Massage Therapy, Podiatry/Chiropody



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Clinic Opening Hours: Monday - Friday 8am to 7pm & Saturday 9am to 2pm

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