

Massage therapy decreased the occurrence of headaches, sleep disturbances and distress symptoms and increased serotonin levels.

~ Touch Research Institute, FL

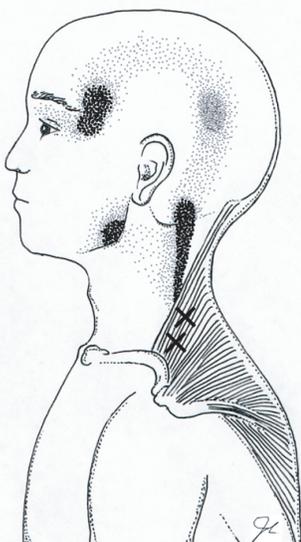
Headache Hullabaloo

At work it arrives without invitation. At home, you miss playing with your children because the pain is unbearable. Headaches and migraines strike anytime, with or without provocation. Headaches are more common than the common cold. Does this sound like you?

- "I've always had really bad headaches." You resolve to be a survivor and bear the pain.
- "Not tonight dear, I have a headache." As cliché as this sounds, your headache continues to prevent you from engaging in many activities.
- "Medications work some of the time, but I have no other options." You need to go and see your Massage Therapist about this one!
- "My headaches happen often, but it's not severe enough to seek help." If you're losing time to heal a headache or having to call in sick, it's time to get help.

All headaches (including migraines, cluster headaches, sinus headaches, and tension headaches) have the power to govern your time. Poor posture, stress, jaw problems, and allergies can cause headaches. Sunlight, fluorescent lighting, the stuffiness of a room, depression, medications, food, and bodily changes can all provoke that nasty, unrelenting visitor to spread throughout your valuable head-space. If you have frequent headaches it is important to keep a record of when your headaches occur, search for patterns to try to determine possible triggers, and to share this information with a health care professional. Alleviating and eliminating headache pain is a possibility.

Some people needlessly suffer from tension headaches for years, taking an Aspirin here and an Advil there. We live in a pill-popping culture where quick fixes cause temporary relief, but not long lasting results. **Massage therapy aims to understand the source of your headache, to reduce it, and to eliminate the "triggers" for good.**



Referred pain by the upper trapezius muscle.

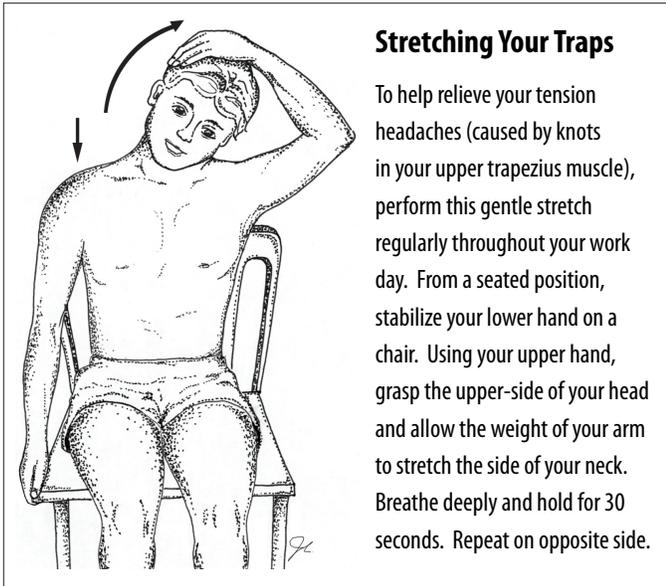
Muscular Contraction Headaches

To avoid headaches, it is important to be deeply relaxed. Muscle tension is one of its' leading causes. Muscular tension in your head, neck, upper back and shoulder muscles produce muscular contraction headaches. Unhealthy muscles and connective tissue can develop "trigger points" or small knots of varying degrees of pain that lead to the head in characteristic patterns. The diagram on the left shows the pain referral pattern for the upper trapezius muscle.

Massage therapists are specially trained to treat these small knots, also called "myofascial trigger points." When it comes to headaches, massage therapy takes no prisoners; it is an effective treatment. **By employing a variety of deep tissue massage techniques, gentle stretching, and hydrotherapy, your myofascial knots will melt away like ice cream on a summer's day--and so will your headache!** In addition to massage, your therapist may prescribe individualized home care exercises to help your recovery (see 'neck stretch' on reverse).

Cont'd on reverse side...

Muscular Contraction Headaches (Cont'd)



Stretching Your Traps

To help relieve your tension headaches (caused by knots in your upper trapezius muscle), perform this gentle stretch regularly throughout your work day. From a seated position, stabilize your lower hand on a chair. Using your upper hand, grasp the upper-side of your head and allow the weight of your arm to stretch the side of your neck. Breathe deeply and hold for 30 seconds. Repeat on opposite side.

Headache is a symptom of some underlying disorder; any unusual headache, or first-time serious headache especially in adult, accompanied by nausea and vomiting, should be considered for a referral to a medical practitioner.

~ Dr. Vincent DelMonte, D.C.

Fast Facts About Headaches:

1. 90% of all headaches are tension and/or migraines.
2. Women suffer from tension headaches more frequently than men.
3. Chronic headaches may be a sign of emotional stress or depression.
4. Cluster headaches can occur in groups, daily for weeks or months, then fade away, only to recur in later years.

All About Migraines

Most people have experienced a tension headache at one time, but not everyone has had a migraine headache. **All migraine headaches are characterized by severe pain, and in many cases:**

- nausea
- diarrhea
- mood alterations
- increased appetite
- tremors
- dizziness
- sensitivity to light
- excessive sweating and chills
- sleep disturbances
- anxiety

People with an active migraine headache look "sick." The throbbing or pulsating pain is very intense, usually covering one side of the head and it may spread over to the opposite side. While the specific causes of migraines are largely unknown, experience hypothesizes that the actual pain experienced during a migraine is caused by changes in blood vessel diameters in your head. Classic migraines present a pre-headache warning, usually visual disturbances and/or ringing in the ears (maybe even intuition!) Other times, the migraine can come on like a freight train.

Migraine trigger factors: stress, rapid fluctuations in hormones levels (e.g. Estrogen), certain foods like chocolate, alcohol, red wine, food preservatives, aged cheese, nuts; bright sunlight, poorly ventilated environments, depression, and hypertension.

Massage therapy achieves excellent results in treating and preventing migraine headaches. According to studies performed at Miami's Touch Research Institute, "massage therapy decreased the occurrence of headaches, sleep disturbances and distress symptoms and increased serotonin levels." (a powerful vasoconstrictor and is found especially in the brain and blood serum). **Above all, your Massage Therapist aims to understand the source of your headaches, and to prevent recurring migraine attacks.**

For appointment bookings or more information, please call: (905) 897-8889