

Editorial

Permanent Relief From Allergy-Based Headaches?

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Searching through the history of headaches, various interesting anecdotes and developments have been noted on the subject. Head pains are described in detail in the Bible as well as in medical writings from ancient Egypt, Babylonia, Greece, Rome, India, and China. It was very interesting to note that a common treatment for headaches in ancient Egypt and India was to apply sandalwood paste on the forehead or inhale the smoke from burning sandalwood (Incense). For over 4000 years, in India sandalwood has been considered sacred for religious purposes as well as highly valued for medicinal use. According to ayurvedic medicine, sandalwood paste and the sandalwood essential oil are known to have these following medicinal properties:

- Antibacterial
- Antiviral
- Antifungal
- Antiinflammatory
- Anxiolytic
- Antispasmodic

Sandalwood essential oil, which is very expensive in its pure form, is used primarily for Ayurvedic purposes, and treating anxiety. When used externally, Sandalwood oil or Sandalwood paste (made from mixing water with Sandalwood powder) has a calming, cooling effect on body and mind. Sandalwood balances the circulatory, digestive, respiratory and nervous systems. Like many alternative therapies, few controlled, double-blind studies have been carried out so far. Researchers have found that aromatherapy induces relaxation and clarity of mind.

Historical evidence from the 7th Century BC shows that severe chronic headaches were treated by the oldest

known surgical procedure, known as trepanning, in which the surgeon drilled a hole as large as 1–2 inches in diameter in the patient's skull without benefit of anesthesia presumably to relieve the pressure and "evil spirits or demons" inside the head that might be causing such pain. Evidence of trepanning has been found in skulls from Cro-Magnon people that are about 40,000 years old. During the next several thousand years, descriptions of headache and various treatments for it continued in different ways in different cultures, which only shows even those days headaches were a universal ailment. People everywhere desperately were looking for cures for headaches either for themselves or to help their loved ones or to help their patients. The heart warming stories of such explorations can be found scattered throughout art, literature and primitive medical texts.

Headache with neuralgia was recorded in the medical documents of the ancient Egyptians as early as 1200 BC. In 400 BC Hippocrates described the visual aura that can precede the migraine headache, and the relief that can be induced by vomiting.

WHAT IS A HEADACHE?

Headache is a pain felt anywhere in the head above the neck that may be a disorder on its own, a symptom of an underlying medical condition or functioning as a warning signal for more serious disorder(s). The medical term for headache is cephalalgia. Headache is one of the most common, universal human ailments, probably began since human life began in the world.

STATISTICS ON HEADACHES

Headache is one of the leading causes of absence from work. Ranging from slight discomfort to total disability, head-

aches are a serious threat to health everywhere.

The American Council for Headache Education (ACHE) reports that, during the past year, nearly 90 percent of men and 95 percent of women have had at least one headache.

According to the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) and the American Council for Headache Education (ACHE): As many as 45 million Americans have chronic, severe headaches that can be disabling.

It is estimated that about 45-50 million a year seek medical help for headaches in America. Among them about 35 million people suffer from migraines. About 70% take painkillers at least once a month. 12.5 million Americans get a headache every day.

Migraine sufferers lose more than 157 million workdays per year because of headache pain.

TYPES OF HEADACHES

There are two types of headaches: primary headaches and secondary headaches. Primary headaches are not associated with or caused by other diseases. Examples of primary headaches are migraine headaches, tension headaches, and cluster headaches. Secondary headaches are caused by associated disease. The associated disease may be minor or serious and life threatening.

CAUSES OF HEADACHES IN GENERAL

Nerve Irritation

Headaches due to upper respiratory infections

Headaches due to hormonal imbalances

Headaches due to stress, insomnia, and stress-related issues.

Headaches due to psychogenic causes

Headaches due to inappropriate nutritional intake (Hypoglycemia, etc.)

Headaches due to metabolic disorders (Thyroid, diabetes, kidney disorders, etc.)

Headaches due to hypertensive disorders, cardiovascular and circulatory disorders, etc. (Stroke, TIAs, etc.)

Headaches from toxic overload in the body (Constipation, improper elimination, etc.)

Headaches due to nutritional deficiencies (lack of essential vitamins, minerals, proteins, etc.)

Headaches due to sensitivities and allergies to daily

essential nutrition (food allergies)

Headaches due to allergies and sensitivities to chemicals and environmental agents (fabrics, detergent, pillow and cases, dry cleaning agents, chemicals, environmental toxins, pet danders, exposure to extreme heat, cold, etc.)

Headaches due to acute or chronic traumas and injuries (cerebral concussion, old or new auto accidents, whiplash injuries, sports injuries, etc.)

Headaches due to organic causes (brain tumors, aneurysm, etc.)

Headaches due to brain infections like meningitis, encephalitis, etc.

Headaches due to intoxication (alcohol, overeating, etc.)

Headaches due to toxins from Substance abuse

DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENTS IN GENERAL

There are various traditional and nontraditional diagnostic procedures available to detect the cause(s) of headaches. Many invasive and noninvasive procedures are also performed to reduce or eliminate headaches.

The treatment of the headache depends on the type and severity of the headache and on other factors such as the age of the patient or duration of the headaches. However, there are two kinds of treatment plans for headaches.

Abortive: Abortive treatment is used with headaches that are already in progress. Pharmaceutical support is used if needed.

Prophylactic: Prophylactic treatments are becoming more popular lately. It is sensible to prevent headaches if possible rather than trying to get relief after getting it.

Traditional Chinese Medicine and NAET® fall in this type of treatment. According to NAET® theory, most headaches (except the ones from organic or injury related) are arising from some type of allergy. Using NAET® testing procedures one can easily track down the common triggers of allergy-based headaches. When the diagnosis is correct, treatment becomes easier. When the triggers are located, the sufferer can choose either pathway: complete avoidance of the trigger(s) or eliminate the adverse interaction of the triggers through NAET® desensitization procedures. Whichever route the sufferer wants to choose, that would be fine as long as he/she can put the agony behind and move on to the future with a smile.

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