



## Self help for headaches

Headaches are usually caused by problems outside the brain such as constricted blood vessels, neck joints, muscles and jaw.

A chronic headache which is not increasing in intensity is unlikely to be caused by a tumor. Most x-rays and scans to exclude tumors are unnecessary.

### Common triggers to avoid

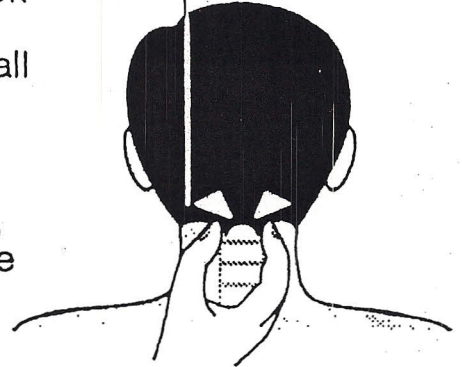
- Sleeping on stomach, with neck twisted.
- Alcohol, cheese, nuts, MSG, cured meat, artificial sweeteners.
- Jaw overworked: grinding teeth, chewing gum.

### WHAT WORKS

#### ACUPRESSURE

- Lean forward over a desk and rest head on hands.
- Have helper feel for small depressions (pressure points) at base of skull.
- With thumb and index finger on pressure points, massage or hold pressure for 5 minutes.

Best to press in and up "toward opposite eye."



#### PREVENTION

- Feverfew tablets effective for many headache or migraine sufferers (health store or any pharmacy).
- Sibelium tablets (on prescription).

### Long-term management

- Avoid daily use of painkillers as they will cause rebound headaches.
- Chiropractic: Good if cause is neck problem.
- Dental checkup to rule out dental and jaw problems.
- Acupuncture: Useful to reduce hypersensitivity of nerve to pain.
- Herbal remedies to treat constitutional imbalance.