

Headaches



What are they?

Headaches are a sharp, throbbing pain or ache in the head, scalp, or neck. The pain originates from the tissues and structures that surround the brain because the brain has no pain receptors. The periosteum that surrounds bones; muscles that cover the skull, sinuses, eyes, and ears; and meninges that cover the surface of the brain and spinal cord, arteries, veins, and nerves, all can become inflamed or irritated to cause which can cause a headache. These headaches can last several minutes to several days.

Primary Headaches:

Tension headaches are the most common headaches. Tension headaches are the most frequent health complaints with 76% of women and 57% of men having them at least once a month. These headaches cost the U.S. economy approximately \$17 billion a year in lost work, disability payments, and health care expenses. These headaches are caused by the tightening or tensing of muscles in the shoulders, neck, scalp, and jaw. The pain tends to be on both sides of your head and often start at the back of your head and continue forward.

Common Factors and Triggers:

- Stress
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Head injury
- Holding your head and neck in an abnormal position
- Bad posture
- Staying in one position for a long time
- Clenching one's jaw
- Caffeine
- Food allergies or skipping meals
- Smoking
- Alcohol
- Lack of exercise
- Before, during, or after menstrual periods
- Change in certain brain chemicals

It is important to consult with your doctor or physician if you are experiencing any of the above factors and symptoms. The cause of a headache can be determined with a patient's complete health history and a physical exam. It is important to keep a headache diary where you can record when they occur, how often and how long, where they occur, what you ate and drank for the past 24 hours, how you slept and how long, what you were doing and thinking about before the headache started, and what you did to make it stop.

There are a few things that people like to do on their own that help stop headaches without the need of medication. Some people like to take hot or cold showers, this will help relax the body. They also like drinking water to avoid dehydration, resting in a dark and quiet room, putting a cool cloth on their head, changing their lifestyle such as exercise and diet, and trying yoga.

You can contact us at *Appleton Chiropractic* if you have any questions or are seeking a consultation! Call us today at (920) 731-0715. We are located at 2425 W. Wisconsin Ave Appleton, WI 54914 right across from Copps Grocery Store!

References:

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/003024.htm>
<http://www.medicinenet.com/headache/article.htm>
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<http://www.healthline.com/health/headache>