

## Headaches

Headache is among the most common pain complaint seen in primary care doctors' offices. As many as 45 million Americans suffer from headaches. It is important to seek medical care for headaches because, if treated correctly, more than 85% of headaches will respond to treatment.

Many headaches originate in the muscles or joints of the neck, this pain is called a cervical headache. Stress causes our muscles to tense up at the base of the head and neck, triggering headaches, but this type of muscle tension is not caused by stress alone. Often, cervical headaches are created from poor posture and repetitive motions. For instance, many of us tend to slouch, and lean forward when sitting at our desks, causing pressure on our neck. For every inch a person's head goes forward, it adds an additional 10 pounds of torque to the muscles in your upper back and in your neck.

People who have migraines or tension type headaches may also have a cervical component to their headache, which means the migraine pain can be brought on by a neck strain.



## Physical Therapy and Headaches

The physical therapists will help to identify the cause of the headache and then specifically treat the problematic joints or tissues. At Troxell & Mohr physical therapy, the therapists are experienced in hands-on individualized treatment and in the evaluation and treatment of headaches. After a diagnosis has been made, our physical therapists may choose from a range of treatment options, including exercise for flexibility, strength, stability, and restoration of range of motion. A series of ice, heat, and deep massage is used to release the tension. Our physical therapists will also suggest specific techniques that headache sufferers can use to change their lifestyle to reduce or even eliminate the headaches for good.



## Exercise and Headaches

When experiencing a migraine headache many people find that any type of movement or activity increases the pain. Although, *between* migraine attacks, there is good evidence that maintaining a consistent schedule of exercise can help

prevent future migraine headaches. There are studies that link exercise, in itself, to a potential treatment for migraine headaches. In a recent study, specific exercises resulted in an average headache reduction of 50%.

There are ways to prevent an exercise-induced headache. Vigorous exercise can sometimes trigger a migraine attack. Exercise-induced headaches are usually caused by a too rapid increase in the intensity of exercise. Starting out slow with a longer warm up period will help. As fitness improves, the frequency of exercise induced headaches declines. Our physical therapists can show you the proper techniques and approaches to exercising and design a pain-free exercise program just for you!

**Talk to Troxell & Mohr Physical Therapy today to schedule a FREE screening**

