

63. SELF-TREATING HEADACHES

Without a doubt, headaches are one of the most common -- and most self-treatable -- ailments we suffer. Western science has discovered more than 60 types of headache, with "the worst" (that is, causing the most people the most grief) arguably being the *migraine*. But for nearly *any* kind of headache, there are a variety of "self-health" methods you can use ... alternatives to reaching for an aspirin or stronger medication.

But though the pain may be in the head, what will we actually be treating? In "energy medicine" -- the system of healing that includes acupuncture, homeopathy and many other "alternative" therapies -- most headaches are thought to be caused by an "imbalance" (too much or too little energy) in ... the liver.

That organ is one of the most crucial in the digestive process. This implies that headaches are often linked to abuse of food or intoxicants (the liver's role as a filter and detoxifier cannot be overemphasized). Sugar, alcohol and food allergies are prime culprits as the cause of most headaches. If you suffer from headaches regularly, avoidance is obviously wise. If headaches continue after avoiding apparent abuses, special food allergy testing might be called for. Tension is another common cause of headaches -- and here, too, the liver is involved.

The easiest and most convenient energy medicine method for self-treating most common ailments -- including headache -- is a simple form of touch: acupressure. Acupuncture without needles. A mainstay of Oriental families for countless generations, this remarkably effective self-help method has become increasingly popular in America since the late 1960's. Download a free Basic G-Jo Training Chart from The G-Jo Institute's website www.g-jo.com for illustrations of six important G-Jo points.

In Issue Number One of this magazine, I described a simple way to relieve many headaches using a powerful acupressure point on the back of the hand, between the thumb and pointer finger. Another useful point -- G-Jo point #4 -- is located on the lower forearm (outside or hairy side of the arm) about two inches back from the crease of the wrist, toward the elbow, in line with the middle finger -- specifically, between the two arm bones, in a small hollow or depression

Press the *tip* -- not the pad or fleshy part -- of the left thumb (or if you have a long thumbnail, the bent knuckle of the left index finger or even the eraser tip of a pencil) into that depression between the bones. Press deeply until you sense a tender "ouch" point. This will feel like a toothache or pinched nerve when you contact it -- the more it hurts the better it is likely to be for your kind of headache.

Once you locate the spot, do step two of this very easy three-step process: "trigger" the point deeply, in a digging or goading kind of fingertip massage. Do this for 15 or 20 seconds on the right forearm, then stop and duplicate the find-and-trigger technique on the hairy side of the *left* forearm for another 15 or 20 seconds.

If this is the best point for your type of headache, several things should occur. First, you should feel an "acupressure reaction" -- warmth, clamminess, perspiration or similar response as you trigger the point. This should happen as you stimulate that area on both arms, if it is a particularly good point. Then you should feel a sense of relaxation or a mild "glowing" sensation ... and, of course, relief of your headache. There are actually more than 20 acupressure points for headache relief. (All the many G-Jo Acupressure points and their hundreds of uses are found in the G-Jo Institute's *Master of G-Jo Acupressure Home-Study Certification Program* -- see www.g-jo.com).

While most headaches are caused by food/intoxicant abuse or tension, there are several types of headaches that should receive professional attention -- those that:

1. Strike without apparent cause ...
2. Awaken you from a deep sleep ...
3. Are accompanied by confusion or convulsions ...
4. Change character after a history of similarity ...
5. Are localized in a specific place (e.g., the eye, ear, etc.) ...
6. Follow a blow on the head ...
7. Are constant, daily or frequent ...
8. Are recurrent, especially in children.

For migraine, there are several additional methods which may be helpful. The first is to try "rebreathing" into a paper bag, until you begin to feel a bit breathless or lightheaded. This indicates a change the carbon dioxide level of the blood; that has been shown to sometimes break up a migraine, even after it has been in progress for a while.

Finally, at the first sign of the migraine, plunge your hands (to above the wrists) in very hot water. Hold them in place for as long as possible. If that doesn't stop the migraine, try very cold water. You may be pleasantly surprised.

Questions and Answers

Q: What does "G-Jo" mean?

A: G-Jo means "first aid" in its native Chinese. It is a simplified form of acupressure, as compared to the more complex forms, known as *shiatsu* or *jin shin do*, etc. Basic G-Jo is particularly well-suited for self-application and is normally used symptomatically (vs. for prevention of suffering).

Q: How does acupressure actually work?

A: While the process may never be fully understood, energy doctors (such as acupuncturists) believe that the body-mind is ultimately a mass of energy in motion, but its physical and mental functions are controlled by biochemicals produced within the organs and glands. When too much or too little of one or more of the necessary biochemicals are produced, we suffer pain, mental distress or a variety of other symptoms in response.

Each organ has a group of acupuncture points located near the skin which are "responsible" for maintaining its proper functioning. When we are suffering specific symptoms, then a "good" (malfunctioning) acupressure/-puncture point is "triggered" (stimulated), the underlying organ responds; its biochemical mixture is automatically readjusted back toward normal (health); the target symptoms diminish -- and hopefully disappear -- as a natural side-effect of the correct biochemical balance being at least temporarily restored.

This, of course, is an extremely simplistic explanation of a complex subject, but there is now scientific evidence confirming that biochemistry is affected when acupuncture (including acupressure) is applied.