



SELF-CARE FOR FEWER HEADACHES

Chronic headaches usually result from multiple factors. You can decrease your headaches by reducing factors like tension in your neck and shoulders, excess life stress, hormonal imbalances, unexpressed emotions, or toxic reactions to medications or alcohol. Try keeping a headache “log” to help you determine any patterns that may be contributing to your headaches.

Note: If you ever experience a sudden severe headache unlike anything you’ve experienced before, seek medical attention immediately.

Here are some other suggestions:

1. **Muscle tension is often the culprit** in chronic headaches. Massage is one of the most effective methods of relaxing muscles.
2. **Frequent, gentle stretching** of the neck and shoulders can also help relieve muscle tension.
3. **Exercise**, whether aerobic, yoga, tai chi, or some other activity may help reduce your stress and tension.
4. **Drinking plenty of water** and eating a balanced diet can help keep your system in balance.
5. **If you work at a desk**, make sure your computer is set up correctly to prevent eyestrain and strain on your neck muscles. Seek help from your ergonomics department at work or ask your massage therapist for more information.
6. **Stress counseling may help** you learn to relax and let go of things you can’t control.

Your massage therapist may be able to refer you to qualified and experienced exercise and yoga instructors, nutritionists, naturopaths and stress counselors.

Resources

Headache Help: A Complete Guide to Understanding Headaches and the Medicines That Relieve Them. Lawrence Robbins, MD and Susan Long.

An Alternative Medicine Definitive Guide to Headaches. Robert Milne, MD and Blake Moore with Burton Goldberg.