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**Reduce Migraine and Headache Pain with Acupuncture**

Are you plagued by chronic headaches? More than 45 million Americans (one in six) suffer from chronic headaches, 20 million of whom are women. Scientific research shows that acupuncture can be more effective than medication in reducing the severity and frequency of chronic headaches.

The pain that headache and migraine sufferers endure can impact every aspect of their lives. A widely accepted form of treatment for headaches, acupuncture can offer powerful relief without the side effects that prescription and over-the-counter drugs can cause. Headaches and migraines, as well as their underlying causes have been treated successfully with acupuncture and Oriental medicine for thousands of years. Acupuncture and Oriental medicine can be used alone in the management and treatment of headaches, or as part of a comprehensive treatment program.

Traditional Chinese Medicine does not recognize migraines and chronic headaches as one particular syndrome. Instead, it aims to treat the specific symptoms that are unique to each individual using a variety of techniques such as acupuncture, tui-na massage, and energetic exercises to restore imbalances found in the body. Therefore, your diagnosis and treatment will depend on a number of variables including:

- Is the headache behind your eyes and temples, or is it located more on the top of your head?
- When do your headaches occur (i.e. night, morning, after eating)?
- Do you find that a cold compress or a darkened room can alleviate some of the pain?
- Is the pain dull and throbbing, or sharp and piercing?

Your answers to these questions will help your practitioner create a treatment plan specifically for you. The basic foundation for Oriental medicine is that there is a life energy flowing through the body which is termed Qi (pronounced chee). This energy flows through the body on channels known as meridians that connect all of our major organs. According to Oriental medical theory, illness or pain arises when the cyclical flow of Qi in the meridians becomes unbalanced. Acupuncture stimulates specific points located on or near the surface of the skin to alter various biochemical and physiological conditions that cause aches and pains or illness.



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- 7 Healthy Habits of Headache Sufferers Staying Healthy**

**7 Healthy Habits of Headache Sufferers**



Headache sufferers can reduce the intensity and frequency of their headaches or migraine episodes by following a few simple steps:

**Nutrition** - Eat regular meals, avoid foods and drinks that are known to trigger headache attacks.

**Sleep** - Practice good sleep habits. Maintain a regular sleeping schedule, including weekends and vacations.

The length, number and frequency of treatments will vary. Typical treatments last from five to 30 minutes, with the patient being treated one or two times a week. Some headaches, migraines and related symptoms are relieved after the first treatment, while more severe or chronic ailments often require multiple treatments.

**Do you or someone you know suffer from headaches or migraines? Call today to find out how acupuncture and Oriental medicine can help you!**

## Headaches Dramatically Reduced by Acupuncture

Since the early seventies, studies around the globe have suggested that acupuncture is an effective treatment for migraines and headaches.

Researchers at Duke University Medical Center analyzed the results of more than 30 studies on acupuncture as a pain reliever for a variety of ailments, including chronic headaches. They found that acupuncture decreases pain with fewer side effects and can be less expensive than medication. Researchers found that using acupuncture as an alternative for pain relief also reduced the need for post-operative pain medications.

In a study published in the November 1999 issue of *Cephalalgia*, scientists evaluated the effectiveness of acupuncture in the treatment of migraines and recurrent headaches by systematically reviewing 22 randomized controlled trials. A total of 1,042 patients were examined. It was found that headache and migraine sufferers experienced significantly more relief from acupuncture than patients who were administered "sham" acupuncture.

A clinical observation, published in a 2002 edition of the *Journal of Traditional Chinese Medicine*, studied 50 patients presenting with various types of headaches who were treated with scalp acupuncture. The results of this study showed that 98 percent of patients treated with scalp acupuncture experienced no headaches or only occasional, mild headaches in the six months following care.

In a case study, published in the June 2003 Issue of *Medical Acupuncture*, doctors found that acupuncture resulted in the resolution or reduction in the frequency and severity of cluster headaches, and a decrease or discontinuation of pain medications. It was concluded that acupuncture can be used to provide sustained relief from cluster headaches and to stimulate the body's natural production of adrenal cortisol to aid in discontinuing corticosteroids.

According to the July 2005 issue of the *British Medical Journal*, a randomized controlled trial in Germany found that acupuncture cut tension headache rates almost in half. Researchers divided 270 patients who reported similarly severe tension headaches into three groups for the study. Over the project's eight-week period, one group received traditional acupuncture, one received only minimal acupuncture, and the third group received neither treatment. Those receiving the traditional acupuncture reported headache rates of nearly half that of those who received no treatments, suffering 7 fewer days of headaches. The minimal acupuncture group suffered 6.6 fewer days, and the non-acupuncture group suffered 1.5 fewer days. The improvements continued for months after the treatments were concluded, rising slightly as time went on.

**Stress** - Implement stress reduction techniques into your daily life.

**Education** - Stay apprised of the latest treatment options and headache relief news.

**Headache Diary** - Keep a diary of when your headaches occur, along with any triggers, and share the information with your healthcare provider.

**See Your Healthcare Provider** - Make an appointment with your healthcare provider to specifically discuss your headaches.

**Be a Partner in Your Headache Care** - Stay informed, so you can be a participant in your treatment and an advocate for improving your own headache care.

## Staying Healthy

Acupuncture and Oriental medicine can help prevent illness by building up the immune system with just a few needles inserted into key points along the body's energy pathways.

These points are known for strengthening the circulation of blood and energy and consolidating the outer defense layers of the skin and muscle (wei Qi) so that germs and viruses cannot enter through them.

## CANOLA OIL: Is it Healthy?

Those of you who have read my articles (some would say rants!) probably already know the answer to that question. Canola oil is widely touted as one of the "healthy" oils because it contains one of the highest amounts of Omega-3 fatty acids. Omega-3 fatty acids are believed to help prevent heart disease. Canola oil is said to be better than olive oil. Olive oil contains no Omega-3s and has more saturated fat than canola.

Canola oil is not a natural oil. There is no canola plant or seed. Canola oil comes from hybridized, genetically modified rapeseed plants. You can begin to see why they call it canola oil. Who would buy rapeseed oil? The name canola is an acronym for "Canadian oil low-acid". Canadian because rapeseed grows well in the cool climate of Canada, and low-acid because the erucic acid content has been genetically modified to be lower in the oils that are sold for human and animal consumption.

Normally rapeseed has a very high content of erucic acid, a particularly nasty fatty acid which has been shown in animal studies to cause serious heart problems. So food scientists have reduced the amount of this acid so it can be sold as a food for humans and animals. Sounds good, right? Ah, no!

A number of studies have evaluated the health effects of consuming canola oil. When fed to lab animals, canola oil causes an increase in blood pressure, promotes insulin resistance (which is a precursor to diabetes Type 2 and some people now think Alzheimer's and dementia), increased risk of stroke, kidney lesions, and premature death.

Because canola oil is composed mostly of monounsaturated fats, it was once thought to be more heat stable for cooking purposes, but studies show it produces free radical mutagenic byproducts just as readily as other vegetable oils used for cooking. Coconut oil, olive oil, ghee, and saturated animal fats like lard are the safest choices for cooking oils.

The free radicals found in canola oil wreak havoc on the body. Antioxidants are quickly used up defending the body against these rogue molecules. After you eat canola oil, and other polyunsaturated vegetable oils, the body's protective antioxidant reserves are significantly depleted. Animals fed canola oil developed Vitamin E deficiency, despite the fact that their diet contained ample amounts of the vitamin. Vitamin E deficiency can lead to some serious health concerns such as anemia, muscle degeneration and weakness, fibrocystic breast disease, as well as an increased risk of heart disease and cancer.

And there is no such thing as a healthy or safe form of canola oil. Virtually all the canola oil sold in stores or used in the food industry is genetically engineered (GE or GMO). That's why you won't find any canola oil labeled "certified organic". It doesn't really exist. And because GMO crops are more heavily doused with pesticides, your body then has all the toxic fallout from that to deal with as well.

As a customer of Whole Foods, I recently became very concerned about the amount of canola oil that they use in their prepared foods. When I voiced my concerns to the manager of the prepared foods department, I was met with the party line. The manager was either unaware of canola oil's dangers or was stonewalling me. I think Whole Foods uses canola oil in so many of its products because it's inexpensive. The same way most food industry companies do.

Seasonal acupuncture treatments also serve to tonify inner organ systems and correct minor annoyances before they become serious problems.

**Call to see how acupuncture and Oriental medicine can help you stay healthy**

I've also become aware that Whole Foods is actively opposing the enactment of new food labeling legislation that would require companies to list on their food product label the ingredients which are GMO. Could this be because so many of their products contain genetically modified ingredients? Sadly, profit margins come before consumer safety in the food industry. Even in stores like Whole Foods. So please read labels carefully when you food shop, and ask questions if you have doubts. Avoid canola oil and all polyunsaturated oils. They all increase heart disease and cancer risk.

GMO foods have not been studied long-term. Altering the genes in foods very likely will negatively affect your health. What is known about GMO foods is that in some cases GMOs can cause sickness and death, and are dangerous to the environment. You can learn more about GMOs at [www.responsibletechnology.org](http://www.responsibletechnology.org).

Please don't be fooled by food industry propoganda that promotes canola oil as a healthy choice. It is definitely not fit for human consumption.

To your continued good health!

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