

## Patient Information Center: Treating Headaches

Q: How does a Chiropractor find the causes of a headache?

A: By careful diagnosis. For example, it's possible that chronic muscle contractions in the back, shoulder, and/or neck have caused a spinal distortion, which in turn, has contributed to more stress, tension, and headache pain. If this has happened, the doctor can bring the vertebrae into alignment and thus take the pressure off the nerves and relieve the stress and resulting headache. If the headaches have stemmed from an accident, such as severe neck strain from a whiplash injury, proper case management can not only relieve the headache pain, but also can adjust the cervical spine (neck) and restore and strengthen the neck muscles.

Q: How can I prevent future headaches?

A: The patient and the doctor must work together to accomplish this. While the doctor can relieve headache pain and correct structural problems that contribute to headaches, the patient needs to avoid any particular physical or structural factor(s) that can trigger a headache.

These factors could include bad posture, certain foods, alcohol, and drugs with side effects. The individual also must learn to control emotional stress and learn to relax. Regular exercise has proved to be one of the best ways to relax and a great antidote for headaches.

Source: (Iowa Chiropractic Society)