

## **Don't Let a Headache or Migraine Ruin your Workday: Here's How to Stop It in Its Tracks**

Jerry V. Teplitz, JD, Ph.D.

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The thumping in your head just won't go away. Neither will your 5 p.m. deadline. What can you do?

Let's face it: headaches and the business world go hand in hand. In fact, *USA Today* estimates that 50 million Americans experience some form of severe headache each year for which they will seek medical attention. Of those, 50% are men and 95% are women. Headaches are one of the most common causes of workplace absenteeism, and it's easy to understand why. Concentrating on your work is tough when your head is throbbing.

Several types of headaches exist. One of the most debilitating is a migraine, which affects almost half of all headache sufferers, mostly women. A migraine differs from a "regular" headache in that it is a throbbing ache on one side of the head, often accompanied by nausea, vomiting, and visual disturbances. Tension headaches cause a steady ache in back of the head and along both sides of the neck. Cluster headaches are recurring headaches that cause severe pain in one eye. These headaches occur almost exclusively in men who smoke or drink heavily.

A number of factors trigger headaches. In fact, there are 129 known causes for them. Stress, poor posture, food additives, and indulging in chocolate and wine can cause headaches. Even relationships can cause headaches and migraines. "He/she gives me a headache" isn't just a figure of speech. The weather can also be a factor. Specific weather conditions, like cold, dry air, generate just over half of all migraine headaches. Finally, even the cool white florescent lighting you are under at work can give you a headache.

When it comes to headaches, most people are looking for a quick fix. Usually that comes in the form of an over the counter (OTC) pain reliever. So most people pop some pills and hope for the best. But some pills may take a long time to work and some may make you drowsy. Unfortunately, when headache remedies don't work after the first dose, many people will try another. But you can't pop medicines in your mouth like candy.

The fact is that you can overdose on OTC medications. Just because you can walk into any pharmacy or grocery store and buy them doesn't mean they're safe. Taking more than the recommended dosage can be dangerous. Excessive amounts of these drugs can hurt the intestinal tract, kidney, and liver. In fact, 106,000 Americans die each year from the side effects of legitimate drugs prescribed by their doctor.

Additionally, OTC medications for migraines can cause headaches when used in excess. These are called "rebound" headaches, which can occur if you grow dependent on painkillers. When the last dose wears off your body cries out for more by giving you another headache.

There are many types of treatments for migraines and the other types of headaches. This article will focus on the common headache and what can be done to relieve it, drug-free.

The answer is Shiatsu, an old Japanese finger pressure technique. It is a much more safe and effective treatment than any medication you can find on a store shelf. You don't even have to leave your desk. It just takes 90 seconds to do and it will get you immediately back to peak functioning.

### **Shiatsu Benefits**

Shiatsu is a 5,000 year-old Japanese healing technique that involves application of pressure to certain points on your body. Blockages in your internal flow are reflected externally as discomfort, soreness, stress, insomnia, fatigue and many other symptoms, including headaches. Shiatsu massage is done by applying a hard steady pressure to the point on which you are pressing. Regular Shiatsu massage therapy helps relaxation, improves circulation, and strengthens the immune system. Shiatsu works very well on headaches, quickly and without side effects. Besides the headache treatment you will be learning below, these are treatments that stop migraines in five minutes, as well as treatments for sinus colds, stiff neck and sore shoulders.

Following are step-by-step instructions on how to perform Shiatsu to eliminate common headaches.

### **The Basics**

These instructions are written for doing the treatment on yourself. The instructions for doing it on someone else vary slightly. Sit in your chair with your hands and feet flat on the floor. Apply a hard, direct, and consistent pressure at each point for three seconds. If you feel pain, stop pressing that point immediately and move on to the next point. During your next sequence, you may be able to tolerate more pressure at that same pain spot by pressing softer at first and then gradually press harder. In many cases the pain will have disappeared. If the headache persists after following these treatments, consult your physician.

### **The Treatment**

Do each step in the listed sequence:

1. Imagine you parted your hair in the middle. This is the line you will be following. Start pressing at the middle of the forehead where the hairline begins. Apply a hard pressure with your thumb. Continue moving your thumb back (at one-inch intervals) following the part and applying a hard pressure. Separate until each point is an inch apart and press your thumbs toward each other. Your final point will be the hollow at the base of the skull where the neck and spine meet. It's called the medulla oblongata.
2. At the crown or highest point of your head, put your thumbs next to each other and apply pressure. Follow an imaginary line down from the crown to the temples, which are right in front of your ears. Finish by pressing three seconds at your temples.

3. With your thumbs, find the back middle of the earlobe on both sides of your head and move in about one and a half to two inches toward the back center of your head where the medulla oblongata is located. Press toward the front of your body for three seconds. Move both thumbs halfway in toward the medulla and press your thumbs on both sides toward the front of your body. Now press one thumb in the medulla.
4. Drop straight down a half-inch from the medulla and place a thumb on each side of the spinal column. Pressing toward the front of the body, drop down an inch each time until you come to where the base of the neck and shoulders meet.

Three times should be enough to get rid of your headache. If not, do it once more. If your thumb gets tired from applying the hard pressure, place your middle finger on top of your index finger and press with both fingers. This will simulate the same level of pressure as you receive from just using your thumb.

While occasional headaches are unavoidable for most people, they don't need to grind your productivity to a halt and ruin your day or evening. In the time it would take you to find some pain relievers and a drink of water, you could be done with your Shiatsu treatment and back to work. So the next time a headache strikes, don't rummage in your desk for some aspirin. Skip the pills and enjoy the relaxation and pain relief of Shiatsu.

About the Author: Dr. Teplitz is an author, attorney and has a Ph.D. in Wholistic Health Sciences. He is author of *Managing Your Stress*, *Switched-On Living* and *Brain Gym for Business*. He speaks and consults on management, leadership, sales and personal development issues. Contact him at 800 77-RELAX (777-3529), Email [Info@Teplitz.com](mailto:Info@Teplitz.com) or go to [www.Teplitz.com](http://www.Teplitz.com).