

## Headaches – Herbal Clinic Swansea

Pain, anywhere in the body is like a warning light on the car dashboard – it is there to tell us something is wrong. Taking a painkiller is the equivalent of removing the warning light; the aggravation disappears, but the problem is still there.

If you experience regular headaches, take a little time to listen to what your body is telling you and consider what the cause or causes may be. Headaches need not be accepted as a normal part of life.

### Causes

**Dehydration:** Causing constriction of the blood flow to the brain and poor elimination. Drink plenty of water, 4 pints per day in the winter and 6 pints in the summer. Try drinking hot water with some freshly squeezed lemon first thing in the morning to get you off to a well-hydrated start.

**Diet:** Irregular eating patterns disturb the blood sugar balance within the body. Replacing meals with sugary snacks can be particularly problematic. Ensure you eat at regular times and don't skip breakfast! A simple bowl of porridge oats cooked with soya milk and cinnamon can nourish the nervous system and provide a slow burning fuel for the body. Easier said than done? Work hard to achieve your goal for two weeks and you'll find it becomes your habit, then it's much easier to keep up!

**Unresolved stress:** Stress may be emotional, mental or physical. If a stressful situation persists, internal tension can build up, causing a headache. Take action to resolve any enduring concerns, as a lingering awareness of something that needs to be dealt with will, in itself, cause a headache. Meditation can allow the space and time for your thoughts to settle and provide increased clarity, which will help in guiding you to make positive choices.

**Muscular tension:** Tension in the neck as a result of poor posture, straining or spinal misalignment can cause headaches. A regular massage, either with a trained therapist or willing partner/friend will help to ease the tension. Try to be aware of your posture throughout the day and correct it regularly. Introduce a few stretches in the morning and afternoon to release any tension from the neck and shoulders. Yoga can be a helpful way of learning to let go.

### Herbal Medicines

Herbs work in harmony with the body to restore health and balance, making them a perfect complement to any diet and lifestyle changes you may want to make. In most cases it is advisable to consult a qualified herbal practitioner, as they will be able to formulate a prescription tailored to your individual needs.

**Stachys betonica (Wood betony):** Promotes the growth of nerve endings and is a potent nervous tropho-restorative (nutritive, restoring vital nourishment to an organ or system). It decreases and regulates the flow of blood to the head and can therefore be a useful herb for headaches, particularly of nervous origin.

**Piscidia erythrina (Jamaica dogwood):** Anti-inflammatory and antispasmodic. Contains piscidin, a nerve sedative, and is particularly useful for migraine and tension headaches.

© Extracted from a weekly radio broadcast 2010

Published in 'Labyrinth' magazine in April/May edition, 2011

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