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## Headaches and Chiropractic Care

By Mark Studin | October 2010

It was reported in October of 2010 by Wrong Diagnosis that approximately 1 in 6,16.54% or 45 million Americans get headaches yearly, with many people suffering daily. While the statistical numbers vary based upon your source of information, it can be agreed upon that headaches are very common and shared among Americans at an epidemic rate. Taking into account that a single pill for many Americans to treat a headache can cost as much as \$43, according to Consumer Reports Health Best Buy Drugs, the overall cost to our economy totals billions of dollars and we need to focus not on the treatment of the effects, but the root of the cause.

While there are many types of headaches, including common headaches, migraine headaches, cluster headaches, and tension headaches, the one thing to keep in mind is that there is no such thing as a "**normal headache.**" You are not supposed to get headaches as pain is an indicator of a problem and your body's mechanism of letting you know something is wrong and you need to go fix it.

One of the most common and less understood headaches is the "**cervicogenic headache.**" This is a syndrome characterized by chronic pain around the head that is associated with either the bony structures of the head or the muscles of the neck. This has also been associated with migraine headaches. In a study by Biondi (2005), 64% of migraine sufferers reported associated neck pain/stiffness with their migraine attacks. 31% experienced neck symptoms before the headache, 93% during the headache phase and 31% during the recovery phase. Therefore, cervicogenic headaches are also a component of the migraine headaches and can be treated. One of the hallmarks of determining if there is a cervicogenic component of any headache is to change the position of your head and if you increase, activate or alter the pain pattern, there is a component.

According to Haas, Spegman, Peterson, Aickin, and Vavrek (2010), spinal manipulative care (chiropractic adjustments) resulted in a reduction in pain from cervicogenic headaches of up to **50%** for the group that received adjustments for up to 24 weeks, the length of the study. The researchers also noted a decrease in over the counter medication during the 24 weeks of the study. Haas, Schneider, and Vavrek also reported in 2010 that at 12 weeks, **85%** showed improvement with varying degrees of improvement ranging from a small improviement all the way up to 100% with similar findings at 24 weeks.

**Chiropractic has been proven to reduce, and in many instances totally eradicate, headaches.** The financial cost to headache sufferers for drugs is staggering. Costs for chronic headaches can also include loss of paychecks when sufferers are unable to work, disability costs to insurers and loss of production of workers to industry when their employees cannot perform their jobs on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. Research has concluded that chiropractic has a drugless solution that works.