



SUFFER FROM MIGRAINES?

A MISALIGNMENT OF THE ATLAS MAY BE THE CAUSE!

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Migraines and Cluster headaches have a wide range of symptoms. In fact, there are many of us that think we know what causes our migraines and cluster headaches. Whether you suffer from the vast array of symptoms such as: sensitivity to light, spots or lines, flashing lights, redness, swelling, nausea, vomiting, throbbing pain, depression, numbness, lack of concentration, mood changes, skin coldness, tearing, sweating, or head pain, this is your body's way of telling you something is wrong.

You may say, "*I know what **causes** my headaches.*" *Drinking too much coffee or staying up late triggers my migraine every time.*" Although drinking too much coffee or insufficient rest seem to cause your headache, these are only triggering the headaches and not actually the cause. Alcohol, caffeine, cigarette smoke, altered sleep patterns, bright lights, aged cheeses, red wines, reading, and many other factors are known to trigger migraines and

cluster headaches but again are usually not the **cause**.

If we looked at the loss of workdays alone, headaches have been recorded to have a price tag of approximately \$13 billion and 112 million in bedridden days (1). While the majority of these sufferers are women, men are reporting more and more associated complaints (1).

Cluster Headaches

Cluster headaches, which are incredibly painful, usually come on without any warnings. They are called clusters because they can occur for days or weeks and then cease, only to appear again several weeks or months later. They last on average for 30 minutes and are extremely painful. The patient usually has a history of smoking and alcohol use (3)." The patients usually range between 20-40 years of age (3).

The cause of these headaches can be due to many factors. Nerve pressure and hidden food allergies are the most common causes. Neurologically, researchers have discovered that certain

areas of the brain are not receiving the proper nerve impulses that ascend and descend throughout our spinal cord. Once again, a compromise in our nervous system can be the cause.

Migraine Headaches

Migraines are now being recognized more and more as a chronic illness and not simply just a headache. Chasing symptoms can not only be expensive but cause lost hope when the cause cannot be found. The type of care depends on the cause. For example, a migraine can be caused by visual problems and may be corrected with lenses. If the patient has an infection, the headache can resolve once the infection subsides. But most headaches are due to misalignments in the neck especially towards the base of our head, which is called our brain stem. Many researchers now believe that most migraine headaches originate from base of our brain (4). Today regardless of origin, most headaches are treated with painkillers. This does not get

at the cause but rather attempts to cover up the problem. Millions of dollars are spent each year on everything from over-the-counter medications to prescription drugs which may provide relief but do not get at the cause.

What is Atlas Orthogonal and how can it help? Most people visit a neurologist before a chiropractor due to the severity of the pain and symptoms. Atlas Orthogonal Chiropractic is a specialty in the Chiropractic profession that has proven to be highly effective in treating migraines. It is a system that emphasizes correcting the top bone in our spine known as our atlas vertebrae. This bone is located at the base of the head and houses the most superior portion of our spinal cord. It weighs a mere 2 ounces and covers and protects the doorway that allows nerve impulses to be sent up to our brain and down to our spinal cord. Similar to the Greek term "Atlas" from Greek mythology the atlas bone supports the head that weighs approximately 100 times its mass.

An Atlas Orthogonal Chiropractor detects and corrects the atlas from improper malpositions. The cause of these malpositions fall under three major stressors: physical, such as trauma, chemical, such as toxins or food allergies, and emotional, such as mental stress. As chiropractors we coined the term subluxation, which stems from the medical term luxation, which means to be dislocated. A sub-luxation is less than a dislocation causing nerve

irritation. Some signs of nerve irritation are pain, numbness, tingling, or burning. When the subluxation is present, the nerves become squeezed and may not function properly. Our nerves comprise the intricate network that allow our brain and body to communicate with itself. A subluxation disrupts this communications network. When this communication is disrupted an assortment of symptoms can develop including headaches, migraines, sinus pain, allergies, asthma, pain in the neck and shoulder, numbness and pain in the arms, hands, lower back, etc.

As Atlas Orthogonal specialists, it is our job to reopen the communication networks. By realigning the atlas, we restore the proper nerve impulses that flow to and from the brain and allow the body to heal itself.

The Chiropractic Visit

Dr. Roy Sweat, the founder and developer of the Atlas Orthogonal system states, "The effects of spinal subluxation are very important and have been determined, researched, and documented." After a thorough history and examination, the doctor inspects for subluxation of the atlas by carefully measuring the patient's leg length. Subluxation of the atlas causes the body to alter its structure in such a way that the muscles contract one leg to appear shorter than the other. In most cases, one leg is not actually shorter than the other, but is drawn short due to the body's

compensation for a displaced atlas. (See the illustration on the top of next page)

The Atlas Orthogonal doctor inspects the back of the neck feeling for the irritation of nerves that result from the atlas subluxation. The doctor can feel if there is a problem and the patient can usually feel the pain or tenderness.

After evaluation of the subluxated atlas, we take very precise X-rays. These X-rays show the doctor exactly how the atlas is displaced. Following careful analysis, the specific angles are determined to correct the atlas misalignment.

We adjust the atlas using the Atlas Orthogonal Precision Adjusting instrument. The instrument, developed by Dr. Roy Sweat, uses the principles of percussional force. As the patient lies on one side, the doctor places the tip of the instrument below the patient's earlobe, barely touching the skin. The tip does not move when the adjustment is delivered. There is a weight released in the head of the instrument, which sends an energy wave through the tip. This energy wave moves the atlas into a more orthogonal (90° angle) position, with the patient feeling absolutely no discomfort.

The principle is similar to that of billiards, in that the force of the weight is transferred through the tip of the instrument, to the atlas, moving it back into proper position.

Example---As pool ball #1 is struck, the force is transferred through ball #2, moving

ball #3, while ball #2 remains stationary. Following the adjustment, the doctor immediately checks the back of the neck. With the proper adjustment, the pain and tenderness felt prior to treatment will decrease greatly or even completely disappear. Relief is felt immediately because the pressure on the nerves and muscles has been removed. The doctor then rechecks the leg length which now measures evenly. The legs balance because the spinal muscles no longer have to adapt for the displaced atlas.

One of the most important adjustment steps are post X-rays. These X-rays are taken and analyzed to verify that the proper adjustment was rendered. The doctor may then show the patient the comparison with before and after X-rays.

Pre-X-rays are like a blueprint of the atlas in its misaligned position. The doctor takes post X-rays as a blueprint of exactly what has taken place after the adjustment.

The Spinal Cord/Migraine Relationship

Although the causes vary, migraine research reveals sufferers have abnormal nerve firings in the brain and spinal cord (5). This is why Atlas Orthogonal Chiropractic's approach has such success with these types of complaints. The spine and headache relationship is known as the cervicogenic headache. Those who suffer from cervicogenic headaches have had restrictions in their neck movement especially in the upper cervical area (4). A

study performed in the Journal of Neurological Clinical Science reports that out of 6000 people who suffered from recurring headaches for 2 to 25 years showed that nerve pressure due to the misalignment of the bones in the neck was the most important factor in the headache and should be suspected in those with nonspecific cause (6).

Chiropractic & Migraines

Many studies have shown the great benefits that the drug-free, natural healing approach of Chiropractic has for migraine sufferers. For example, in one study chiropractic care resulted in a reduction of 90% of migraine episodes with the length of each migraine reduced by 38%. In addition, medication use dropped 94% and other symptoms associated with migraine such as nausea, vomiting, photophobia, and sound sensitivities were reduced (7).

In a 6-month study, half of 127 migraine sufferers were given Chiropractic care while the other half were not. Twenty-two percent of the Chiropractic group reported more than 90% reduction in migraines after two months and about 50% in the group reported significant improvement in severity of migraines (8).

In Conclusion

Anyone suffering from headaches of any kind would truly appreciate a gently, painless, and specific approach offered through Atlas Orthogonal Chiropractic. If the atlas is misaligned, no number of drugs can realign it - **to have your atlas checked, you can**

reach our office at 203-381-1800 or visit our website: www.corselloclinic.com.

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