



“A great wind is blowing, and that can either give imagination or a headache.”

- Catherine II

Product of the Month:

10% off

Dang Gui Bu Xue Tang

(Angelica root formula to build the blood)
Described in Nichole's article on page 2.

AIM *for health!*

22635 NE Marketplace
Dr. #130
Redmond, WA 98053

(425) 949-5961

Clearing your Head

Tension Headaches: Trigger Point Therapy

By Dr. Mohammad Shegeft

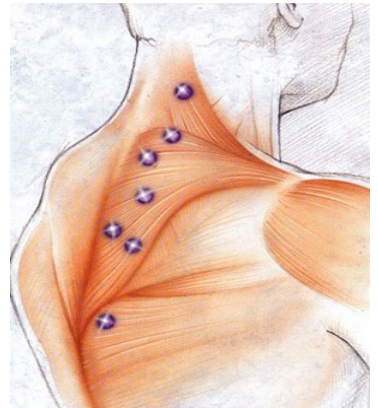
Tension headaches are one of the most common types of headaches. They are usually described as a dull pain at the back of the skull or a tight band around the head. They are the result of chronic tension in your scalp, neck and shoulder muscles. The most common trigger for tension headache is stress and heightened sensitivity to stress, especially in those who hold their tension in the neck and shoulders or have jobs which challenge this area because of repetitive movement or sedentary work and compromised posture. Both tension headaches and migraines can be aggravated with physical activity, however, unlike migraines, tension headaches usually aren't associated with visual disturbances, nausea or vomiting.

Pain medication or muscle relaxers can help resolve the pain, but they do not address the underlying problem. The best and most important ways to address your tension headaches and get to the root are to manage your stress, maintain good

posture and get preventative treatment to ease chronic muscle tension from stress, work or physical activity. Preventative treatment for tension headaches can range greatly and should ultimately be a modality that helps the sufferer get the most relief from the muscular tension. Common treatments that have been proven to get great results include acupuncture, massage, spinal adjustments, stretching and heat. In order to avoid headaches and even injury of the neck or shoulder joints-use one or more of these modalities on a consistent basis to manage chronic neck and upper back tension. *Preventative treatment is enjoyable - where as injury treatment is not as fun!*

If tension has been left untreated for a long time it is common for the body to form "trigger points" in the muscle tissue of the mid and upper back, shoulders and neck. Trigger points are knots or very tender spots that often radiate pain to nearby areas or cause a muscle twitch when pressed. A common place to find these points are at the base of the skull. It is one of the most pleasing and popular targets for massage in the human body. It is no wonder that

releasing tension in these muscles is one of the best cures for tension headaches. Along with other neck muscles, this sub occipital group works constantly to keep your head balanced on top of your spine and trigger points in these muscles compromise blood flow and movement to the head. They are a major culprit of chronic tension headaches. A trigger point injection is an injection that is given



directly into these spots for pain management. The injection is usually a mix of anesthetic such as Lidocaine plus vitamins such as vitamin B12 and homeopathics such as Traumeel. Injections of these medications will block pain receptors, relax the muscle and reduce the inflammation and swelling of tissue. Immediately after injection, most patients feel that their pain has remitted or lessened significantly. Tension and pain continue to fade over a few hours. *See Dr. Mohammad to discuss if it is right for you!*

Rebuilding after the Shedding :

Chinese Medicine spotlight on a common pattern causing headaches in women

By Nichole Santoro, LAc



“Blood Deficiency Headaches” are especially common in women because blood is lost with the cycle each month. This particular type of cyclical headache is very preventable and treatable by using food and herbs.

This type of headache occurs toward the end or immediately following the menstrual period and is characterized by a dull, empty quality that is worse with physical exertion. It presents at the temples or behind the eyes and there is often accompanying fatigue, sleep issues and anxiety or irritability. Women who are already deficient in qi and blood (ie. due to being anemic, overworked, stressed, ill, postpartum, menopausal) are especially susceptible to headaches with the loss of menstruate each month.

It is very important for all women to eat *blood-building* foods during and after the period in order to replenish the blood cells and nutrients lost. The wisdom of traditional Chinese medicine pays special attention to this routine replenishment of the blood after menstruation in order to preserve the yin and promote longevity in women. In western terms this translates into making red blood cells and keeping hormones balanced. By consuming the right foods at the right time and taking a simple herbal tea, headaches can be prevented.

In addition women will notice by following a monthly routine of replenishing the blood that they are more even keeled and resilient.

What are blood building foods?

Blood building foods contain iron and B-vitamins! These two nutrients are present in a lot of the same delicious foods. Meat is an obvious choice for an iron rich food. If you are really blood deficient meat is the ultimate source, and the organs are especially medicinal.

Dark leafy greens, beets, beans, lentils, nuts, dark cherries, black berries, figs, whole grains and black strap molasses also offer a lot of the building blocks necessary to replenish the blood. Women should increase consumption of these nutrient dense foods during the menstrual cycle as well as the week after. When blood is abundant and full of good nutrients we are more grounded, confident and can go with the flow of life as it comes.

DIY Herbal Medicine

The classic herb used to nourish the blood in Dang Qui or Angelica Senensis. This is a famous herb used especially for women in both Chinese and Western herbal medicine. It is used to nourish the blood and regulate menstruation.

Modern research has found it that it dissolves blood clots, relaxes the smooth muscle uterus and of the blood vessels and increases circulation. When combined with Huang Qi or Astragalus root it has been proven to generate new red blood cells. The classic simple formula of Astragalus root and Angelica root tea is a valuable tool every woman can use after menstruation to build blood and promote balance, calm and longevity. Raw herbs can be used to make an herbal tea or premade pills can offer more convenience.

Dr. Brooke Says:

**“How much *water* have you had today?
Did you take your *Cal-Mag*?”**

Go back to basics! If you are experiencing headaches, the first thing you should think about is water and muscle tension. If you go through your day drinking very little, then perhaps a nice cold class of water is just what your head is craving.

Also remember that Cal-Mag, a calcium and magnesium supplement, can help ease the muscle tension that could be contributing to your head pain.