

TANK TIMES

Volume 9.4

September 2011

Brought to you by HealthChoice

COMMON CAUSES OF HEADACHES

Headaches are one of the most common pain-related health problems in both children and adults. Most types of headaches can be treated with home remedies or over-the-counter medications; however, some headaches are more intense and require specific therapies or medications prescribed by a physician. There are tension headaches that are characterized by mild to moderate pain on both sides of the head. Cluster headaches are characterized by deep, stabbing pains, usually around the temples or eyes; they are generally of short duration although sometimes they occur several times a day. Migraine headaches are characterized by throbbing head pain (generally on one side of the head), nausea, and sensitivity to light and sound.

There are many causes of headaches, including:

- Stress and emotional strain
- Caffeine, alcohol, and drug withdrawal
- Eye strain
- Muscle strain in the neck, upper back or shoulder muscles
- Dehydration (when the body loses too much water)
- Medications (prescription and non-prescription medications can sometimes cause headaches)
- Eating or drinking cold foods and fluids

Over-the-counter medications such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen may be used to treat most common types of headaches; however, if the headaches are more severe, you may need a medication that must be prescribed by a physician.

Prevention is the key for headache sufferers. Some ideas that may help prevent or reduce the frequency of headaches include relaxation techniques and massage therapy, physical activity to help loosen up tense muscles around the neck and shoulder areas, and reducing the amount of caffeine in your diet.

Resource: The National Headache Foundation



For more information, call the HealthChoice H.E.L.P. line at 1-800-318-BEOK