

Resolving headaches with FMT



Dr Katherine Kulp

Headaches are a pain in the neck! Many of us quietly suffer with headaches, taking a pill in order to get on with our day. We may have even been told we have migraines or told that there's nothing we can do. Not so! Current research continues

to demonstrate that many of these "headaches" are actually pain referred from the upper portion of the neck.

A classic example is the headache that starts at the back of the head, and then radiates to the forehead or eye; these are generally one sided and can present similar to migraines even though the cause is actually in the joints, muscles and nerves of the upper neck.

Headaches that feel like a gripping or pressing tightness through the entire forehead and temple area are also examples of headaches driven by the neck. When we choose to medicate our way out of a headache, especially if we're taking medication twice a week

or more, we can actually develop rebound headaches, leaving us with even more frequent headaches!

Here is a quick checklist to help you start troubleshooting whether or not your headaches are coming from your neck:

1. Do you awaken with headaches?
2. Do you tend to get headaches after you've been at work for some time?
3. Did your headaches develop after an injury to the head or neck?

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4. Does your headache start with a pain in the upper neck or back of the head that radiates around to the front?

If the cause is in the neck, then you must treat the neck! This is where an FMT approach comes in. Headaches are a complex problem, and can often be linked to several factors. A Functional Manual Therapist will fully assess the neck to understand the root cause of your particular headache. In a headache that is coming from the neck, he or she will be able to recreate the head-

ache upon palpation of the dysfunctional structure. If the problem is in the joints of the neck, we restore natural motion and alignment of those joints. If the muscles of the head and neck have become tight and painful, perhaps even knotted, we first release the muscles, and then retrain the appropriate muscles to work optimally.

Often, in those of us with neck pain, headache, or who have experienced trauma to the neck, the stabilizing muscles of the neck have literally shut off.

Research has demonstrated that without specific retraining of these very important muscles, they do not automatically turn back on. Once the muscles and joints are rebalanced, our ultimate goal is to teach you how to keep your headaches at bay.

If you find yourself continually reaching into the medicine cabinet to address your headaches, you are likely just perpetuating the cycle as opposed to heeding the warning signals of your body. An FMT approach will help you identify the root cause of your headache, treat the joints and muscles that are creating your pain, and show you how to break the habits that have contributed to your headaches.

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Functional Manual Therapy™ (FMT) is a comprehensive approach to physiotherapy, which identifies and facilitates your existing potential through an in-depth examination and treatment of your mechanical capacity, neuromuscular function and motor control. Discover your potential to have less pain and function better with FMT!

To schedule your appointment at the VARDAN Centre (New Delhi):
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