

# THE HEADACHE BOOK

# HEADACHE RED FLAGS

These are not normal headaches, and you should seek immediate, emergency medical attention. Either have someone drive you to the nearest emergency room or call 911.



**Thunderclap Headache:** This is a fast-developing headache that is the worst pain you have ever felt in your life. You are having a stroke. Call 911.



**Neurological changes:** Weakness on one side of the body, unilateral facial drooping, confusion, seizure, new vision loss. You are having a stroke. Call 911.



**A headache plus fever and a stiff neck.** This is possibly a brain infection called meningitis. Go to the ER.



**Head trauma,** especially with confusion and/or vomiting. This is likely a concussion. Go to the ER.



**Pregnancy and severe headache** lasting more than 2 hours: possible preeclampsia. Call your OB/GYN immediately.

**New headaches after age 50** or a history of cancer: Visit your neurologist or oncologist within 2 days.

# BEAT YOUR HEADACHE

## Clear up your nose in 3 steps.



### 1. CLEAR UP YOUR NOSE

Breathing 100% oxygen will break most headaches. Since you don't have an O2 canister laying around follow these steps to help breath better.

Nasal saline to clear congestion: Xlear Nasal Spray is the best option for most. Use Xlear Decongestant or Afrin for faster action, but this cannot be used for multiple days.

- Nasal dilation with a Mute dilator or Breathe Right strip
- Lavender and eucalyptus essential oils under the nostrils will help to open the nasal passages.
- Practice Box breathing



### 2. CALM DOWN MUSCLES

Tension comes from many places. Use these steps to relieve body tension.

- Menthol/peppermint oil on the forehead and temples for headache relief, or the neck to soothe muscle tension
- Acupressure at the LI4, LR3 and GB20 points (see pg 3)
- Trigger point massage (see pg 4)
- Cold/Ice packs



### 3. RECHARGE YOUR BODY

Use the following foods, supplements, and medications to help reset your body.

- Hydrate with water and electrolytes (sodium, potassium, and magnesium) and caffeine
- Ginger capsule (250mg) or tea
- Combination of acetaminophen (1000mg), ibuprofen (1000mg), and Benadryl (50mg).



# OPEN THE NASAL PASSAGE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.

## BREATHE.

**Nasal dilation** with internal (Mute) or external (Breathe Right Strip) nasal dilation. Nasal valve collapse increases headache risk sevenfold. Open your nose to help both neck and head pain.

**Nasal soft tissue:** The mucosa can be enlarged or congested. Use saline spray to help rehydrate the tissue to create normal airflow. Xlear nasal spray or Xlear decongestant are the best for most people. You can also use N-Acetyl-Cystine (NAC) nasal rinse with a netti pot or nasal lavage.

**Essential oils:** Inhaled lavender and eucalyptus essential oils are helpful in opening the nasal passage. Inhale them from a holder or rub a small amount under the nostrils.

**Peppermint oil** is also helping to clear congestion.
Put ONE drop on your tongue and press the tongue to the roof of the mouth. Hold your tongue in place for 60 seconds.

**Breathing exercises:** Side-to-side breathing uses only the nose to breathe. This may be difficult at first, but should be followed to find increased nasal airflow.

Start with a deep nasal breath in and hold for 3 seconds.

Now exhale completely with your nose.

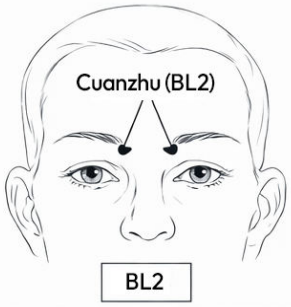
Pinch your nose, hold your breath OUT, and rock your head side-to-side as you count to ten slowly.

After counting to ten, recover by slowly inhaling through your nose about ten times.

Repeat five times.

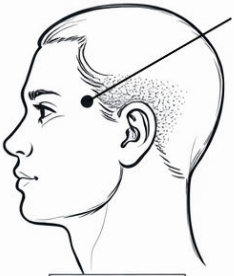
# HEADACHE ACUPRESSURE POINTS

Apply light to moderate pressure on each of the spaces for 60-90 seconds each.

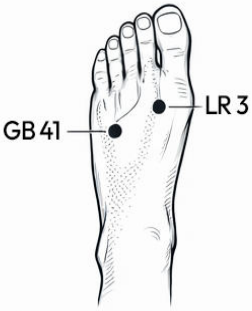



BL2

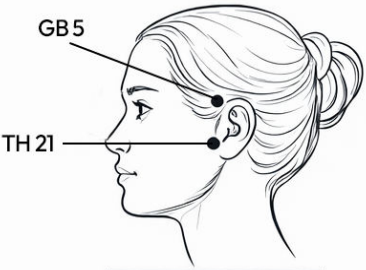
Press both BL 2 points very hard.
This also helps clear sinus congestion.



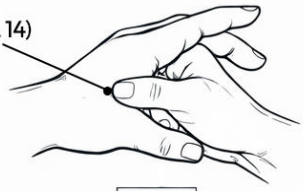

Tai Yang




LR 3 and GB 41




TH 21 AND GB 5



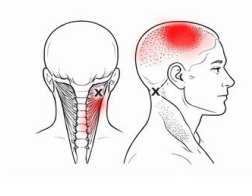

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# TRIGGER POINT MASSAGE

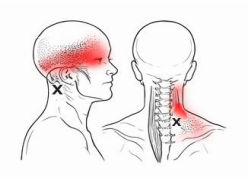
**Many trigger points correspond to acupressure points.**
For trigger points, deep pressure with massaging motion will provide a better response than just pressure. In this chart, red is where you feel pain, but the “X” is where the pain originates from.



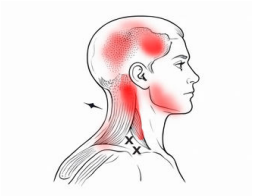
**Masseter**



**Splenius Capitus**



**Splenius Cervicis**



**Upper Trapezius**



**Sernocleidomastoid**



**Sternocleidomastoid**



**Semispinalis Capitus**



**Semispinalis Capitus**



# RECOVERY AND PREVENTION

**After a headache,** some people experience a post-drome. This is a woozy-type of feeling that I call a "memory headache." This is normal and should wear off after about 24 hours. The new question: now what? Headache recovery and prevention are the same processes. Keep it up and minimize the headaches you have in the future.

**Nose: Keep it open.** Use the dilators and nasal sprays. You may need to use a decongestant, but taper off over the next two days at the longest.

**Food: Minimize sugar and dairy products,** focus on fresh fruits, vegetables, and meats. Chewing will help to stimulate the muscles and brain in a good way. Drink extra today and keep using electrolytes. Most of us don't have enough sodium, potassium, or magnesium in our bodies.

**Body: Use any orthotics prescribed as directed.** Make sure to have full body motion and stretch. A 15-minute walk around the neighborhood will be best for recovery, but don't stop today. Keep this as a normal habit so you can have fewer headaches later.

**Sleep: Turn off the lights early** and let yourself get tired. Go on your walk at sunset. Leave your phone behind, and then turn all the lights off when you get home. Go to bed. The darkness will help reset and let you sleep. Don't have an alarm for tomorrow, but if you wake up early, just get up and start your day with another walk.

**Supplementation:**

| Supplement | Dose | Frequency |
|---|---|---|
| Magnesium Glycinate | 200mg | 1/day |
| Vitamin D3/K2 | 5000IU/120mcg | 1/day |
| Omega 3 Oil | 1000mg | 1/day |
| Methylated B-complex | Varies by vitamin, all brands have enough | 1/day |

# WHAT CAUSES HEADACHES?

The International Headache Society lists 14 main headache types with lots of sub-types. That's a lot—but the 80/20 rule applies. Most everyday headaches improve quickly with 100% oxygen, which points to a common root: breathing.

Your body's top jobs are to breathe, eat, and stay safe. When you can't breathe, your brain makes you adapt—often in ways that create pain. Sprain an ankle and you limp; soon your opposite knee or hip aches. With a stomach bug, you hunch to ease your belly even if your back hurts. Your brain constantly chooses the least painful position.

For headaches, poor breathing is the main frequent driver.
When you breathe well, you feel well.

**Why breathing goes bad:**
Nasal inflammation is the biggest culprit. It can start early—even before birth. If a newborn can't nose-breathe, the body switches to mouth-breathing. The tongue drops, the upper jaw misses the tongue's gentle pressure, and the face grows narrower. That can shrink airway space and make breathing harder long-term.

**What you can do now:**

**Eat clean**—Cut back on three groups: grains, dairy, and added sugar.

- **Grains** (wheat, corn, etc.): grass seeds that cause inflammation.
- **Dairy**—especially cow's milk—doesn't agree with many adults; soy mimics milk proteins, so avoid this too.
- **Sugar** drives inflammation and water retention. Treat sweets like a spice or enjoy them inside whole fruit.

# 5 HABITS TO PREVENT HEADACHES



Nasal Breathing;



Clean eating, and don't forget to have enough salt;



Consistent Sleep (Bed within 2 hours of sundown, wake when you feel rested, at least 6.5 hours);

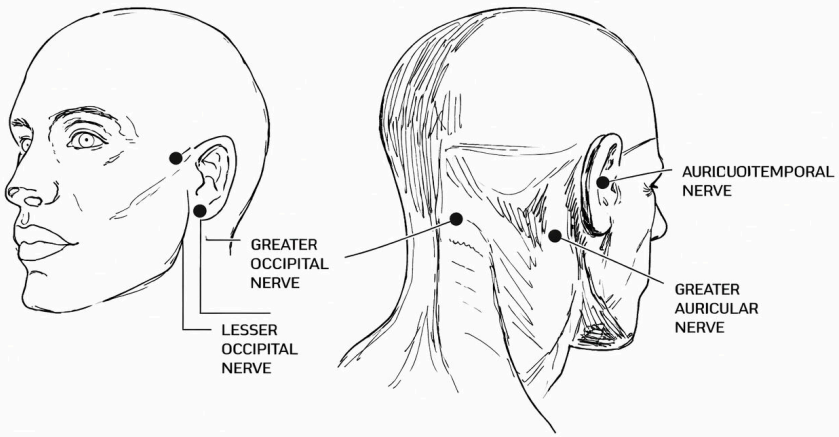


Regular exercise (30 minutes 5x per week);



Drink enough water.

# HOW TO APPLY PEPPERMINT OIL




Place 1 drop of peppermint essential oil on each of these areas and rub in for 15-20 seconds.

Lie down in a dark room for 20-30 minutes with your eyes closed.

This will not solve the problem, but it will help relieve pain by 20-50%.



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