

Headaches and unnecessary pain - By Mark McCall (Registered Osteopath)

When you read headlines like these describing the news surrounding Brad Pitt's headaches on a return trip from Ethiopia then, if you're a headache sufferer, you may be forgiven for thinking that it's just one of the many scourges of modern living. However you may be putting up with pain unnecessarily! According to guidelines published by the International Headache Society, 90% of all headaches are primary in nature. What this means is that they are not caused by a medical condition or disease. So although they may not be satisfactorily relieved by drugs, these types of headaches can often respond well to other treatments, such as osteopathy and acupuncture, which look more at how imbalances of the body can give rise to pain.

As an Osteopath, I've found that by using my knowledge of the body and how it works and by examining the neck and surrounding tissues, it's quite possible to detect if some pattern in these areas might be the cause of the problem. There is, for example, a nerve called the Greater Occipital nerve that runs under the back of the skull up to the top of the head. Tightness of the tissues around the course of this nerve can lead to a reduction in its blood supply. A headache is then caused as the nerve tries to let you know that it's not happy! By improving all the tissues and blood supply in the area, we generally have a very high success rate in helping to alleviate the pain due to this physical imbalance.

This is, of course, just one example, in one area of your head. Osteopaths look at many possible causes of head pain and even 'classic migraine' symptoms can sometimes respond very well to treatment.

So if you suffer from headaches, there are plenty of different facts that we can assess and treat – maybe after all, your headache is an unnecessary pain!

As part of the Woodside Clinic's 'first birthday' campaign to promote healthy living, readers of the Biggleswade Chronicle are invited to have a free headache and / or spinal assessment. So call the clinic for an appointment today to see if they think they can help you – it could well prove to be the treatment that works to end your headaches for good!

Shefford's Woodside Clinic provides treatment for neck, back, hip, knee and shoulder pain, foot problems, sports injuries and headaches

For information about Osteopathy, Physiotherapy, Acupuncture, Pilates, Podiatry, Homeopathy and a variety of complementary therapies please call 01462 850228 or see www.woodsideclinic.co.uk