

# Azul Massage and Body Care: Monthly Newsletter

August, 2016

Member, Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals

## Holding Headaches at Bay

### Bodywork Eases Migraines and Tension Headaches

Cathy Ulrich

"Do you get headaches?" I asked Cindy. She had come to see me for massage to address her neck and shoulder pain but hadn't mentioned headaches.

"Well, yes," she said. "I've always had headaches and, now that you mention it, they seem to be worse when my neck hurts." Cindy went on to say she suffered from them as often as 2-3 times a week and typically treated them with ibuprofen.

Like many Americans, Cindy suffers from chronic, frequent headaches. Her neck pain finally prompted her to seek help, but she was so used to the headaches, she thought they were something she simply had to live with.

#### MIGRAINES.

Migraine headaches occur when the blood vessels in the brain become dilated, usually due to a chemical reaction, such as food allergies or a stress response. They often start with visual disturbances and quickly develop into severe head pain accompanied by nausea, vomiting, dizziness, and sensitivity to light. They're usually felt on one side of the head, but can be on both sides. Migraines are often managed with medications and avoidance of foods known to trigger them, such as red wine, chocolate, aged cheese, and nuts. However, some bodywork techniques can also be effective in easing migraines or decreasing the frequency of these painful headaches.

#### TENSION HEADACHES.

Exaggerated by stress, tension headaches are related to poor posture, jaw problems (such as temporomandibular joint disorder, or TMJ), and neck pain. Many people describe a headache that starts at the base of the skull and then moves in an arc over the ears and behind

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*Judging A  
Person Does  
Not Define  
Who They Are.  
It Defines Who  
You Are.  
~Unknown*

#### Office Hours and Contact

**Azul Massage and Body Care**

**810-522-5460**

**Sun. 12:00-6:00 PM**

**Mon. 12:00-9:00 PM**

**Tues. thru Thurs. 10:00 AM -9:00 PM**

**Fri./Sat. 10:00 AM - 8:00 PM**

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Freedom from chronic headaches is an option many Americans don't even realize is possible.

What Cindy didn't understand was that frequent headaches are not normal and, with a little proactive planning, there is something that can be done to manage and even prevent them.

## Types of Headaches

Headaches come in many varieties. Following is a short list of the most common types.

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the eyes. Tension headaches are most often caused or exacerbated by poor posture, work station positions, and body mechanics, creating undue stress on the upper neck muscles.

#### MIXED HEADACHES.

The term mixed headache is used to describe a tension headache that leads to a migraine. Typically, the tension headache starts first and the chemicals produced from the pain of it create conditions for a migraine to develop. In people with patterns of mixed headaches, the best way to avoid the onset of a migraine is to treat the tension headache.

## Bodywork Options

A treatment regimen that includes bodywork, attention to body position, and stress management can help prevent or greatly reduce the frequency of headaches, in turn reducing your reliance on medication and the need to avoid food triggers. There are many different bodywork techniques, each with specific approaches for treating headaches. Following is a short list of techniques often effective in treating recurring headaches.

#### SWEDISH MASSAGE.

A tension headache, by its very name, implies the presence of stress and tension. Swedish massage, on the other hand, promotes relaxation and relieves muscle tension. When muscles become tight due to stress or poor posture, they eventually adapt a chronically shortened state. Swedish massage teaches the body how to let go of muscle tension and resets muscle tone.

#### INTEGRATIVE BODYWORK.

Rolfing, Hellerwork, Structural Integration, and CORE are examples of the types of bodywork designed to improve posture and structural alignment. A primary cause of chronic headaches is poor posture, which produces tension in the neck and shoulders because the weight of the head is not properly balanced on top of the spine. Integrative bodywork can produce lasting postural change for greater ease of movement. By selectively freeing the soft tissues, integrative bodywork literally can change postural alignment and remove the stresses and strains on the muscles that cause headaches.

#### DEEP TISSUE THERAPIES.

The integrative therapies mentioned above, as well as neuromuscular therapy and myofascial release, use similar techniques to free connective tissue. A chronically tensed muscle tends to maintain that tension, even after the stressful event has passed. Deep tissue techniques free the connective tissue glue, creating a new way for the muscle to function.

#### REFLEXOLOGY.

Like acupuncture, reflexology works to move energy blockages in the body. By stimulating points on the feet that correspond to organs in the body, reflexologists can promote relaxation, reduce pain, and restore energy flow. Several scientific studies have shown that reflexology is a viable treatment for migraines, in some cases working as well as, or better than, medication--and without the side effects.

#### CRANIOSACRAL THERAPY.

Craniosacral therapy addresses the inherent, gentle, rhythmic movement of the bones in the skull and their effect on the fluid that surrounds, bathes, and cushions the brain and spinal cord and runs throughout the body. Cranial bones move in miniscule amounts as a response to the production and absorption of cranial fluid. With head trauma, whiplash injury, or even severe stress, cranial bone movement can be compromised, resulting in headaches, dizziness, ringing in the ears, or vision disturbances. This therapy restores the normal movement of the cranial bones and fluid.

By addressing the root of the problem, regularly scheduled bodywork sessions can greatly reduce headaches as well as your need for medication. Remember, headaches are not normal, and you don't have to live with them.



**Reflexology has proven as, or more, effective than medication--without the many side effects.**

# Footprints for Health

You walk on them all day, but did you know your feet do more than carry you from one place to the next? They also have a unique connection to balanced health and well-being. In a form of bodywork known as reflexology, the feet are said to contain reflex areas that mirror and connect to all parts of the body--and pressure on these points can actually influence your state of health.

Reflexology is viewed primarily as a stress reduction or relaxation technique. Using the thumb, finger, and hand, gentle pressure is applied to reflex areas of the feet in order to decrease stress and bring the body into equilibrium.

Although simplistic in application, the effects of the treatment can be profound. Through activation of nerve receptors in the hands and feet, new messages flood into the body system, changing its tempo and tone. In essence, the foot or hand becomes a conduit for sharing information throughout the body. Function in the connecting area is

improved and, at the same time, the body experiences overall relaxation and benefits to the circulation and elimination systems. When the body's systems are at optimal functioning, self-healing is enhanced.

Scientific studies have documented the benefits of reflexology for a variety of ailments, ranging from reduction of pain, improvement in circulation, and release of tension, to improved effectiveness of medication, as well as benefits for diabetes and headaches.

In this sense, reflexology is not a medical treatment for specific symptoms or diseases, but rather a way to facilitate the body's inherent healing power.



**Treat your feet, and body, to reflexology.**

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## Healthy Grilling Tips

Summertime and grills go together like a hot dog and mustard. But could that hot dog actually be doing you harm? Alice Bender, registered dietician at the American Institute for Cancer, says that diets high in beef, pork, and lamb, as well as processed meats like hot dogs, are linked to an increased risk of colon cancer. She suggests that sticking with chicken and fish can "make this summer's backyard grilling both healthier and more flavorful." Use herbs and spices to amp up flavor, and try marinating for 30 minutes before you grill, which can reduce the amount of heterocyclic amines--the potentially cancer-causing compounds formed when grilling.

Here are some other tips to help reduce health risks associated with the grill:

### TRIM THE FAT

Fat can increase smoke, which may contain carcinogens, so choose leaner meats and trim excess fat.

### DON'T BURN IT

Charred, well-done meat can increase your risk of pancreatic cancer, according to a study from the University of Minnesota.

### BUT COOK IT THROUGH

Make sure that you hit the USDA recommendations for internal temperature, which can be found at [www.foodsafety.gov](http://www.foodsafety.gov).

### MORE VEGGIES!

Grilling vegetables does not create the same heterocyclic amines as grilling meats. Plus, veggies have less fat and cholesterol in general.

### KEEP IT CLEAN

Don't let a charred mess build up on your grill, because it will eventually find its way onto your food.

*There are two  
gifts we should  
give our  
children. One is  
roots, and the  
other is wings.  
~Unknown*

A special Thank You to all of our clients! Azul Massage and Body Care is celebrating its One Year Anniversary!

JUST OWN TODAY!!

Lavelle VanHorn: Owner of Azul  
-Azul Massage and Body Care  
-Azul Cycle Training Club  
-Industry Fit by Azul

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## Azul Massage and Body Care

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