

Editorial**Body Pain Remedies from Head to Toe****Mohsin Masud Jan**

Editor

A throbbing head, a crick in the neck, all-over muscle tension – yeow! Chances are you're no stranger to these kinds of everyday aches and pains. One in four people say they've had a bout of pain that has lasted more than a day. But, fortunately, there's plenty you can do besides pop ibuprofen to work out the kinks so a sore back or a bum shoulder doesn't slow you down. There are even lifestyle moves that make a difference. Here's what you need to know to ward off pain – and feel better if you're already hurting.

Just about everyone has headaches, but a migraine is not just a bad headache. A migraine headache is a complex condition of the nervous system. It is often described as an intense pulsing or throbbing pain that usually occurs in one area of the head. Migraine attacks may cause severe, debilitating pain for hours to days, necessitating the need to retreat to a dark, quiet place. A migraine headache is often accompanied by additional symptoms, such as nausea, vomiting, and sensitivity to light and sound.

The headache of a migraine attack is characterised by pain on one or both sides of the head. This pain typically lasts from several hours to up to three days. Headache can vary from person to person and from incident to incident, with some migraine attacks causing mild pain, while others are debilitating.

Migraines cause pain as real as the pain of injuries — with one difference: Healthy habits and simple nonmedical remedies sometimes stop migraines before they start. Many people with migraines report sensitivity to light and sound. Make your bedroom dark and quiet, and you may be able to sleep. Not all headaches respond to sleep, but the chemicals released in your brain during sleep may help ease your pain. Also, if you're sensitive to sounds, blocking them out could help.

Ice can have a numbing effect. It detracts the brain from the migraine. You're stimulating other nerve endings where you're putting the compress. Some people may prefer a warm compress. Heat can help relax tense muscles. You may also try taking a warm bath or shower.

Take time to sit and be in the moment. Concentrate on your breathing. This type of mindful meditation can sometimes ease physical pain. According to researches, mindfulness may produce effects comparable to medication alone in people with chronic migraine and medication overuse. Like other home remedies, mindfulness is a distraction that can help ease pain.

Dehydration is often a migraine trigger, and replenishing fluids can restore your body's balance of water and electrolytes. Have trouble drinking enough water? Try this trick: Add a slice of lemon or lime to

make your water taste better so you may drink more. And limit caffeine, which can be dehydrating in large amounts.

Massage can help your muscles relax. Yet whether this helps you is a personal preference. Some people experiencing a migraine may be extremely sensitive to touch, and a massage can make them feel worse. Others find that rubbing their temples stimulates circulation and helps them to relax.

Fatty fish, like salmon, trout, tuna, and mackerel are chock-full of omega-3 fatty acids, which help fight inflammation.

Olive oil may help: A study published in the journal *Nature* found that a compound in extra-virgin olive oil called oleocanthal has anti-inflammatory effects similar to those of ibuprofen.

Regular exercise and physical therapy are usually part of any pain management plan.

Doctors believe exercise is critical in the relief of pain. A large percentage of pain comes from tight muscles. These may be triggered by overuse, inflammation, or other conditions.

Regular exercise is important for treating chronic pain because it helps strengthen muscles, increase joint mobility, improve sleep, release endorphins and reduce overall pain.

Relaxation techniques are often recommended as part of a treatment plan. They help to reduce stress and decrease muscle tension. Relaxation techniques include meditation, massage and yoga.

Yoga also has other benefits for chronic pain. It can help strengthen muscles and improve flexibility. A study funded by the NCCIH revealed that people with chronic lower back pain who took up Iyengar yoga, a practice that focuses on proper alignment, experienced decreased discomfort and less disability after six months.

Research shows that this technique, a staple of traditional Chinese medicine, may help reduce the frequency of tension headaches and relieve chronic pain in the lower back, neck, and knees.

Chiropractic treatment involving spinal manipulation may work as well as conventional care for lower back pain for up to 18 months, per a study funded by the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH). And a review of research found that the technique may be helpful for neck pain and migraines as well.

When used together with medication, these home remedies work for many people. If they don't ease your pain, however, you may consider talking to your doctor about a change in medication.