

Acupressure and Migraines



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Acupressure is a completely non-invasive treatment option that has a high success rate among migraineurs (people who suffer from migraine headaches). It has a proven track record as a successful pain abatement technique. Acupressure is also efficacious in reducing both the frequency and intensity of migraine attacks.

In Traditional Chinese Medicine, there are over 800 vital energy points in the human body. These points lie along meridians that run throughout a person's body. Chi, or life energy, flows along the meridians and through the energy points in healthy people. Chi that is blocked or overabundant near particular energy points causes illness and pain.

Acupressure massage applies pressure to these energy points in order to release chi and stimulate the body's own healing mechanisms. The energy points are massaged with the fingers, thumb, or occasional blunt object with medium pressure in a circular pattern.

The simplest acupressure a migraineur can learn is an all-over head massage. This technique just requires the practitioner to massage the scalp as though they were washing their hair. Sit with the elbows resting on a table to prevent arm strain and the head resting lightly in the hands to perform head and neck acupressure.

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Moderate pressure applied to the GB20 points offers the best relief for migraine pain. They are on either side of the neck, approximately one inch to each side of the spinal column just below where the skull and neck muscles connect. GB20 also goes by the more romantic-sounding Chinese name "The Gates of Consciousness".

Migraineurs seeking to relieve their headache and neck pain should practice deep breathing while using the thumbs of both hands to press firmly on the GB20 points for one to two minutes. If this is painful at first, home practitioners can start out by pressing and releasing the points in five to fifteen second intervals.