



Non-Pharmacological Treatment of Headache: Non-Drug Therapeutic Approaches Such as Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy, Acupuncture, Biofeedback

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Introduction

While medications can be effective in managing headaches, non-pharmacological approaches also play a significant role in alleviating headache symptoms. This summary explores various non-drug therapeutic strategies, including cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), acupuncture, biofeedback, and relaxation techniques, and their role in headache management.

Objectives

The objective of this summary is to provide an overview of non-pharmacological treatments for headaches, explaining how these therapies work and their potential benefits in reducing the frequency and severity of headaches.

Methods

We conducted a review of the existing literature, including studies from PubMed and reputable medical sources, to gather information on non-pharmacological treatments for headaches.

Results

Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is a form of psychotherapy that helps individuals identify and modify thought patterns and behaviors contributing to their headaches. It teaches coping strategies, stress management techniques, and relaxation exercises. CBT has been shown to be effective in reducing the frequency and intensity of tension-type headaches and migraines, especially when psychological factors are involved. Acupuncture is an ancient Chinese practice that involves inserting thin needles into specific points on the body. It is believed to stimulate the body's natural healing processes. Some studies suggest that acupuncture may provide relief for both tension-type headaches and migraines. Its effectiveness may be related to its ability to release endorphins and promote relaxation. Biofeedback is a technique that helps individuals gain awareness and control over physiological functions like muscle tension, heart rate, and skin temperature. By learning to regulate these functions, individuals can reduce headache triggers related to muscle tension and stress. Biofeedback is particularly useful for tension-type headaches and has been shown to decrease their frequency. Various relaxation techniques, such as progressive muscle relaxation, deep breathing exercises, and mindfulness meditation, can help manage headache symptoms. These techniques reduce stress and promote relaxation, which can be especially beneficial for individuals whose headaches are triggered or exacerbated by tension and anxiety.

Conclusions

Non-pharmacological treatments offer valuable options for individuals seeking to manage their headaches without relying solely on medications. Cognitive-behavioral therapy addresses psychological factors, while acupuncture, biofeedback, and relaxation techniques focus on physiological and stress-related contributors. These therapies can be used alone or in combination with medication, and their effectiveness often depends on the individual's specific headache triggers and needs. Incorporating non-pharmacological approaches into headache management can improve overall well-being and reduce the impact of headaches on daily life.

Keywords: Treatment; Headache; Non-Pharmacological.