

6 NATURAL REMEDIES FOR HEADACHES

Headaches are a common medical complaint. There are several types of headaches with causes ranging from stress and eyestrain to sinus infections and problems with blood vessels. No matter what kind of headaches you get, if you get them a lot, your quality of life may be needlessly diminished. The good news is natural remedies offer very effective headache relief.

If you suffer mostly from tension headaches, the best remedies are those that promote muscle relaxation, while migraine sufferers may do better with remedies that have anti-inflammatory properties. Other underlying causes of headaches, such as infections or dehydration¹, can also be treated naturally too.

Here are six effective ways to reduce headache pain without drugs.

Magnesium

Magnesium, an essential mineral that acts as a muscle relaxer, may be deficient in chronic headache sufferers, particularly those who typically get migraines.² Taking a magnesium supplement or eating more magnesium-rich foods may help to reduce the occurrence of these headaches. Nuts and seeds, particularly pumpkin seeds, flax seeds, sunflowers seeds, Brazil nuts and almonds, are rich sources of magnesium. Other sources include cocoa powder and dark chocolate.

Proper Diet

Since headaches can be caused by food allergies and sensitivities, it's a good idea to pay attention to your diet to see if your headaches are triggered by any of the foods you eat. Some of the more common triggers of headaches are caffeinated beverages, certain cheeses, food additives, alcohol and very cold foods like ice cream.

Essential Oils

Applying essential oils to the forehead or neck can help alleviate headaches.³ Peppermint and lavender oils, for example, may effectively in reducing headache pain. Oils like lemon balm and chamomile have a calming effect that can also help if you are prone to stress-related tension headaches

Water

Many headaches are actually caused by dehydration. Drinking a large glass of water every few hours can help to prevent headaches and even relieve them if you drink the water as soon as you feel a headache coming on.

White Willow Bark

White willow bark is an herbal remedy whose active ingredient, salicin, is related to the active ingredient in aspirin. In fact, willow bark is often called “natural aspirin.” Aspirin is salicylic acid, a synthetic form of salicin. Unlike aspirin, however, white willow bark will not upset your stomach.⁴

Feverfew

An aromatic herb native to southeastern Europe, feverfew has anti-inflammatory properties that make it useful as a remedy for migraine sufferers.⁵ The herb has been used to treat headaches for nearly two thousand years. A study in England showed that people who took feverfew for four months had fewer and less severe migraines than those who did not take it.

Targeting Natural Headache Remedies

If you’re not sure what kind of headaches you suffer from, it’s a good idea to talk to your doctor and get a full evaluation. Once you know the type and cause of your headaches, you’ll be able to choose the best approach to treating and preventing them.