

## Advice sheet for Cervicogenic Headaches

### WHAT ARE CERVICOGENIC HEADACHES?

Cervicogenic headaches (CGH) are pain in the head caused by soft tissue or joints of the neck (cervical spine).

### WHAT CAUSES CERVICOGENIC HEADACHES?

Headaches, although have many different causes, can generally be split into two types:

1. Primary headaches; a result of abnormal ties in the brain or head. These include tension headaches, cluster headaches, and migraine which are all common.
2. Secondary headaches; caused by a disease or medical condition. These include inflammatory disorders and injuries to the head and neck and require careful and accurate diagnosis

CGH are classified as secondary headaches. A whiplash injury, poor sitting posture, muscular referral pain and arthritis can all be some contributing factors.

### SYMPTOMS

Some of the main symptoms are:

- Stiff neck.
- Pain in the head
- Nausea and/or vomiting.
- Dizziness.
- Blurred vision.
- Sensitivity to light or sound.
- Pain in one or both arms.

## HOW TO LOOK AFTER IT AT HOME

What you do at home can have a positive impact on your symptoms. Some of the best techniques include:

- Heat therapy
- Self - soft tissue release
- Maintain proper sitting posture
- Avoid prolonged sitting periods
- Avoid letting your head drift forward into a poked head position

## PROFESSIONAL TREATMENT

Where to get help:

- Physiotherapist
- Doctor

Physiotherapists are experts in treating CGH. Some of the main ways they treat them are through soft tissue release, dry needling, exercise therapy and joint mobilisations.

If you need further pain relief consult your GP.

## PREVENTION

- Keep moving and stay fit
- Avoid sitting for prolonged periods
- Gentle resistance exercise such as Pilates can help improve posture
- If you sit at work, check the setup of your desk