Complementary & Integrative Medicine for Headaches

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Objectives
• Define complementary & integrative medicine
• Examine the evidence base for complementary & integrative medicine for headache
• Discuss how to apply this knowledge into the clinical practice of headache medicine

Disclosures
• Nothing to report
Questions She Asks About Integrative Medicine Treatments

• What are the different options?
• What is the scientific evidence that they work?
• Why should I consider these?
• What are the barriers & risks?

Complementary and Integrative Medicine

• Complementary health approaches
  • Practices/products of non-mainstream origin

• Alternative Medicine
  • Non-mainstream practices used in place of conventional medicine

• Integrative medicine
  • Incorporating complementary approaches into mainstream health care

https://nccih.nih.gov/health/integrative-health
Integrative Medicine Definition

- Reaffirms the importance of the relationship between practitioner and patient
- Focuses on the whole person
- Informed by evidence
- Makes use of all appropriate therapeutic and lifestyle approaches, healthcare professionals and disciplines to achieve optimal health and healing

https://www.imconsortium.org/about/about-us.cfm

Integrative Treatment Options for HA

- Lifestyle
- Behavioral, Mind/Body
- Herbs/Supplements
- Acupuncture
- Massage

Complementary and Integrative Medicine for Neurologic Conditions

Rebecca Erin Wells, MD, PhD1, Vanessa Bach, MD1, Helen Willbuth, MD, PhD1


Wells et al. Complementary and Alternative Approaches to Chronic Daily Headache, Part I, II, III

Chronic Daily Headache Book, editors Cowan, Freitag, Green, in print

Migraine & Stress

- Stress # 1 reported trigger (60%)
- Meta-analysis of 7187 migraineurs

Peroutka SJ, 2014
Lifestyle Modifications

- Regularly scheduled meals
- Consistent sleep schedule
- Hydration, decrease caffeine
- Healthy diet

Behavioral & Mind/Body Treatments

**Behavioral**
- Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT)
- Stress management
- Coping skills
- Biofeedback
- Relaxation training

**Mind/Body**
- Meditation, Yoga, Tai Chi
- Guided Imagery
- Biofeedback
- Hypnosis
- Qi gong
- Deep Breathing Exercises
- Progressive Relaxation

Mind/Body and Behavioral Treatments: The Evidence and Approach
Headache 2012;52;S2:70-75.

Prevalence of Mind/Body Use among Adults with Severe HA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Prevalence</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biofeedback</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided Imagery</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressive relaxation</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoga</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meditation</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep Breathing exercises</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Wells et al., Headache 2011.
### Mind-Body Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yoga RCT</th>
<th>Tai Chi RCT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• 72 Migraine without aura</td>
<td>• 47 Tension-type HA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Yoga improved*: HA frequency</td>
<td>• Tai chi improved*: HIT-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• HA severity</td>
<td>• SF-36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Anxiety, depression scores</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Research Submission

**Meditation for Migraines: A Pilot Randomized Controlled Trial**

Rebecca Erwin Wells, MD, MPH; Rebecca Burch, MD; Randall H. Paulson, MD; Peter M. Wajner, PhD; Timothy T. Hoaks, PhD; Elizabeth Ludic, MD, MPH

- ≥18 yo with 4-14 Migraines/mo x 1yr (ICHD-II)
- Randomize to mindfulness meditation or control group
- Before and after, evaluated:
  - HA frequency, severity
  - QOL and well-being

### Results

- Although underpowered, migraines were
  - Less frequent by 1.4/mo d=0.32
  - Less severe (0-10) by 1.3 d=0.61
  - Shorter by 3 hrs d=0.75

- Lower Disability scores
  - MIDAS -13 d=1.37
  - HIT-6 -5 d=0.91

- Self efficacy and mindfulness improved (d=0.8)
Supplements-Discussion

- **Petasites** (Butterbur)-risk of liver toxicity
- Magnesium in pregnancy-now Category D
- Melatonin, Vitamin D, Omega 3 fish oils
- More research needed
Acupuncture

- Hair-thin needles into energy meridians (TCM)
- Balance life energy “Qi”
- Cochrane review (22 studies, 4,985 pts)
- Systematic review (31 studies, 3916 pts)
  - Decreased HA frequency in episodic, chronic HA
  - Vs. Sham, usual care, drug rx
- Few side effects, esp. compared to meds
- Cost analysis: quality adjusted life yr (+)
- Daith piercing: not acupuncture

Massage

- Few studies overall
- Suggestive of possible benefits for
  - Migraine, tension type, cervicogenic
- Studies limited by:
  - Small sample sizes
  - Lacked proper control groups
  - Heterogeneity of interventions

When to Consider

- Medications not working
- Medication overuse
- Interested in non-drug approaches
- Build self-efficacy: empower, active
- Address other factors playing a role
- For ALL patients
How to Choose Best Option

- Co-morbid conditions
- Prior experience
- Interests
- Adherence
- Cost, Time
- Access, Coverage
- Risks, side effects

Discuss with your Patients

- 30-80% Prevalence of use
- Up to 50% have not discussed use with their providers
- Important to ask, clarify, understand

Final Tips and Pearls

- Integrative Medicine is an important component of excellent headache management
  - Your patients likely have considered/ tried
  - Engaging patients in discussion important
  - May empower patients
- Treatment options include lifestyle, mind/body, supplements, acupuncture, massage
- Evidence is growing, but methodological concerns still limit interpretation
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Acknowledgements

Research Support

• NIH National Center For Complementary & Integrative Health (NCCIH) K23AT008406

• American Pain Society Sharon S. Keller Chronic Pain Research Grant

• National Research Service Award T32AT000051 from NCCAM at the NIH

• 2011 American Headache Society Fellowship Award

• National Institutes of Health (NIH) Loan Repayment Program
Any questions?

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