

Headaches and Chiropractic



Chiropractors have been proven to relieve several types of headaches, but are especially known for treating **tension headaches**. Tension headaches are responsible for **over 50% of all headaches**. Tension headaches usually present bilaterally and wrap around the head in a bandlike fashion. Symptoms from tension headaches can last up to 30 minutes to 7 days. Many people try over the counter drugs first, but only 7% receive pain relieve; with the relief being only temporary. Most see relief through chiropractic, but how?

Tension headaches are **triggered** by simply tight muscles around the back of your neck and head. These little muscles (suboccipitals) get tight from **stress**, looking at a computer, or driving for a long duration of time. These muscles are also affected from eye strain, fatigue, emotional stress, and poor posture. Other triggers may include dehydration, alcohol, caffeine or medication. Now, I'm sure none of us experience any of these problems!!

Through **spinal manipulation**, specific soft tissue and possibly modalities (estim/ heat) we can loosen those little muscles that can get quite tight. Besides performing specific soft-tissue work through the back of the head spinal manipulation has magical affects as well. Chiropractic adjustments decrease pain signals by inhibiting pain neurotransmitters to the brain. The spinal adjustment also causes parasympathetic effects releasing rest and digest hormones. This release affects vascular headaches as well by opening up arteries and allowing for more blood flow. Refer to the spinal manipulation page to find out more about the effects of spinal manipulation. Some specific anatomy of tension headaches is included for the anatomy geeks.



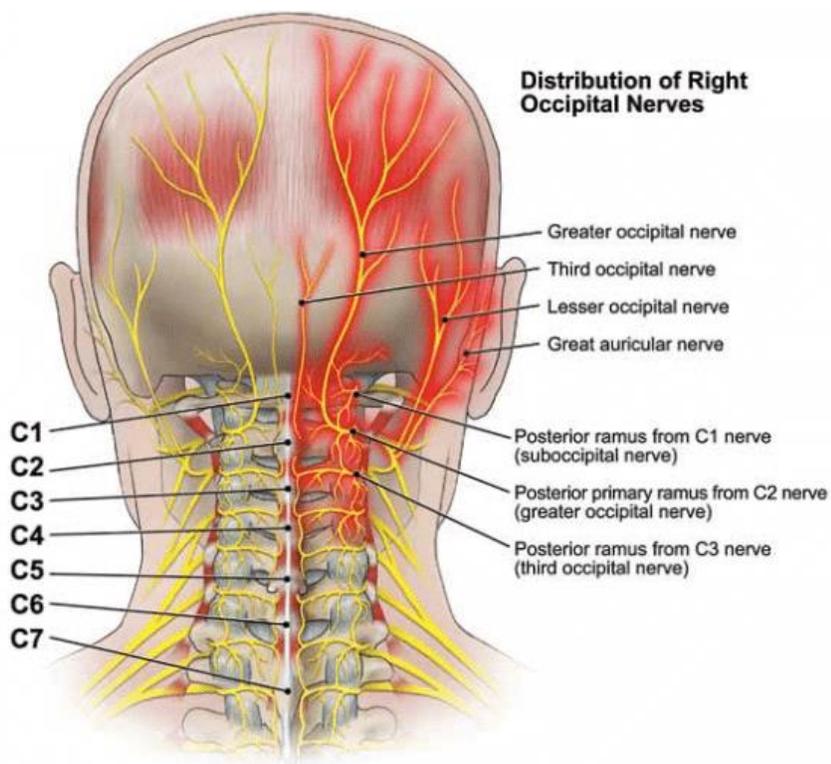
Suboccipital Triangle



: located just below the back of the head there are three little muscles that make up this triangle.

- Green: obliquus capitus superior
- Blue: Rectus capitus posterior major
- Red: Obliquus capitus inferior

When these muscles get tight, they squeeze the lesser and greater occipital nerves shown below. Other postural muscles of the neck should be addressed as well.



What else can you do?

- Drink enough [water](#)
- Get enough sleep
- Try a [B-Complex](#)-for making energy and nerve health
- [CoQ10](#)-a powerful antioxidant used by every cell in the body
- [Magnesium](#)- helping to control blood sugar and nerve transmission
- Avoid Nitrates-often found in processed foods
- Try an elimination diet
- Take [Ginger](#)- a great anti-inflammatory agent that helps with gut-health as well
- Get some mild [exercise](#) in



