HEADACHES (1/2)

Cardinal Pediatrics
304-599-8000

Caution with Over-the-Counter Pain Medicine

Don't be tempted to turn to over-the-counter pain medication every time your child complains of head pain. If you do, be sure to always read the label for any medication to determine the right dose based on your child's weight.

- **Acetaminophen** (Tylenol): You can give your child one dose to help reduce headache. Do not exceed the maximum dosage and frequency for children, 22-33 milligrams per pound within a 4-hour period.
- **Ibuprofen** (Motrin/Advil): If acetaminophen does not initially work, you can also give one dose of ibuprofen. Do not exceed the maximum dosage and frequency for children, 13-22 milligrams per pound within a 12-hour period.
- Keep track of how often you are giving these medications. If you are using more than 3 doses total per week, consult your pediatrician to determine if other medication is required.
- Using more than three doses per week can also lead to medication overuse headaches (also known as analgesic rebound headaches). Children and teenagers can get these types of headaches from taking pain medicine too often, and therefore, being dependent on the medication. The over-the-counter medications no longer work to reduce pain, and the headaches become more frequent and more painful! Not good

Home care for Children's Headaches

Anyone who has ever had a mild, occasional headache knows rest and relaxation is often the best treatment. There are things like ice packs, warm shower or baths, naps in a dark room, and head and neck massage may also help.

Mind and Body Approaches:

- Massage
  - Massage therapy may be helpful for a child with chronic daily headaches and includes a variety of techniques in which practitioners manipulate the soft tissues of the body. Massage therapy can be used in conjunction with a healthy diet, regular exercise, stress management, and avoidance of headache triggers.
- Acupuncture
  - Acupuncture may also benefit a child with headaches. This ancient Chinese remedy involves a practitioner inserting thin needles through the skin, which releases endorphins, and reduces the perception of pain. Treatment usually occurs one or two times a week for 4 to 6 weeks.
- Biofeedback
  - Biofeedback is one of the treatments researched most extensively for migraines. It measures body functions so that the child can learn to control them. For example, a biofeedback device may show tension in a child's neck muscles in the back of the head that are causing the headaches. By watching how these measurements change, the child becomes more aware of when his or her muscles are tense and learns to relax them. Several biofeedback programs and devices are available in clinics or at medical centers, but also available for home use.
- Guided Imagery
  - Guided imagery, self-hypnosis, or relaxation can be helpful for preventing headaches. Children are often great at this technique, as it uses their imagination and mental images to promote relaxation. Some pediatricians are trained in these relaxation skills or may refer you to another trained practitioner who work with your child.

304-599-8000

Remember we are only a phone/text call away!

HEADACHES (2/2)

Cardinal Pediatrics
304-599-8000

Dietary Supplements for Headache Prevention:

- Vitamin B2 (riboflavin)
  - Riboflavin is a B-vitamin that may reduce the number of headaches and pain. Rare side effects may include diarrhea, increased amount of urination, and yellowish discoloration of urine.
  - Dose:

- Magnesium
  - Magnesium supplements may also help reduce the number of headaches if taken for several months. Magnesium deficiency is related to factors that promote headaches. Teens who get migraines may have lower levels of magnesium in their bodies than those who do not. The typical diet of an American teenager may be deficient in magnesium-rich foods such as dark green leafy vegetables, beans, seeds, nuts, and whole grains. Magnesium supplements can cause diarrhea and may interact with some medications. They should be used only under the supervision of your child's pediatrician.
  - Dose:

- Coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10)
  - Coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10) is an antioxidant present in each cell of our bodies; however, it was found to be deficient in one third of children with migraines. Taken as a dietary supplement, it may help lower the frequency of headaches. It is generally well-tolerated by children without significant side effects. Rare and mild GI symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, decreased appetite, and heartburn have occurred.
  - Dose:

- Migrelief
  - Contains Magnesium and Riboflavin. Can be used for patients as young as 2 years of age. Follow directions on bottle.

Sleep:

- Get at least 8-10 hours of sleep per night. It is important to have a regular bedtime and wake time and not vary more than 1-2 hours.

Lifestyle changes:

- Drink lots of water. You should have at least half of your body weight in ounces of water per day.
- Avoid all caffeine.
- Exercise regularly.

Headache Journal Link

304-599-8000

Remember we are only a phone/text call away!