

BIG

Questions

Kids Have

About

HEADACHES



*I want
to know!*

*An information and treatment planning
booklet from the
Pediatric Headache Clinic
University of Maryland
Hospital for Children
22 South Greene Street, Rm. N5W40
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Many kids have headaches, and many kids want answers!

Here's how to get answers to some of the BIG questions about headaches.

WHAT'S THE CAUSE OF MY HEADACHE?

DIFFERENT KINDS OF HEADACHES

There are different kinds of headaches that affect children and adolescents. They can be divided into two basic categories:

- ***Primary Headaches***
- ***Secondary Headaches***



Primary headaches are caused by pain signals in the head and brain, but not as a result of other sickness. Some primary headaches are tension headaches, migraine headaches, and cluster headaches. These are the most common forms of headaches.



- It's that stick in there...!

Secondary headaches come as a result of something else that is wrongly affecting the body. Sometimes an infection causes pain to the head and other areas. Sometimes substances that enter the body cause a bad reaction. Sometimes something is growing that pushes different areas and causes pain. Secondary headaches are much less common than Primary headaches.

DOC-TECTIVE

Your doctor can let you know what the cause of your headache pain is. He's like a medical detective, searching for all kinds of clues to solve the mystery. Here are some of the techniques he uses:



- *Getting a detailed history of your health, your headache patterns, your family's headache history*
- *Giving a physical exam. Maybe blood pressure, fever, asthma or some other physical issues may give some more clues about what's really going on*
- *Getting a neurological exam. This checks head and mental status. Maybe there's something about mood, level of clarity, responses to questions that can yield some clues...*
- *Using lab and other imaging Tests. Maybe there is some chemical or physical difference that can shed some light on what's going on*

WHAT WILL MAKE IT BETTER?

Your doctor will help you find ways to make your headache feel better.

Here are some of the methods he might suggest:

- *Pain relief medications*
- *Prevention medications*
- *Change in diet*
- *Change in sleep patterns*
- *Exercise*
- *Relaxation techniques*

USE THE PLAN, MAN

Your doctor will come up with a very specific "game plan" to prevent and treat headaches.

You can ask the doctor to fill out the "Here's the Plan" section on the back of this booklet. Review it and use it!

AM I GOING TO DIE?!

YES! OF OLD AGE.

Everybody will, eventually. But in the very vast majority of situations, headaches do not cause death or indicate that you should start giving away your CD collection.



- I'm too young for
that sort of thing!

THE BIG FEAR

Many kids and their parents are very afraid that the headaches mean there is a brain tumor or some other serious neurological disease. The frequency of tumors among all kids who have headaches is extremely small.

ASK THE DOC

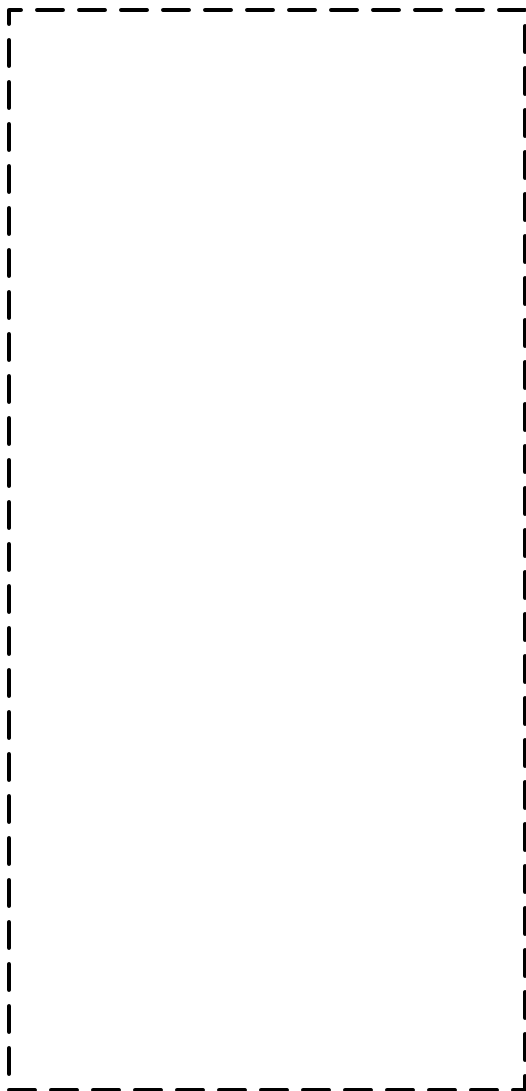
After the doctor does his detective work, he will let you know. Ask him...then take a deep sigh of relief. And put your CDs back where they belong!



*Sometimes
pictures are
stronger than
words, and
stronger than
headaches
too!*

**DRAW
YOUR
HEADACHE**

OK, Here's
the Plan...



- I beat that headache!



University of Maryland
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