



INSTEAD of popping pills, you can banish headache agony with natural – and some unorthodox – remedies most doctors don't know about.

“There's a lot of information that hasn't percolated into medical practices where the emphasis is looking only for the latest, greatest pharmaceutical,” says Dr. Victor Sierpina, professor of Integrative Medicine and Family Medicine at the University of Texas Medical Center.

Adds Dr. Alexander Mauskop, director of the New York Headache Center, “One in three people in this country have tension headaches that may be controlled naturally.”

Exercise is an easy and healthy way to prevent and relieve headaches, he says. It reduces stress and brings blood and oxygen to the brain.

Another remedy is – sleep. “Sleep deprivation is a leading cause of headaches,” Mauskop tells GLOBE. “Some people do best with six hours of sleep while others need nine.”

But be careful, he warns because “too much sleep can also give you a headache.”

Other non-drug therapies like biofeedback, hypnosis and muscle relaxation have proved

HEADACHE CURES YOUR DOCTOR MAY NOT KNOW



Botox injections and massaging muscles around the forehead can prevent headaches, experts say



successful, according to Sierpina.

His tips for warding off headaches include:

- Take a few deep breaths when you feel a headache coming on.
- Relax muscles by applying heat or cold to the tense area.
- Massage your temples and

tight muscles in the neck and shoulders.

One unique method of getting relief is having Botox injected into the forehead which relaxes the muscles, says Dr. Merle Diamond, managing director of Chicago's Diamond Headache Clinic.

“About 35 to 40 percent of my patients get a good response from Botox,” she says.

“Sometimes it's effective after only one treatment,” she adds.

“But if there's a partial response, it's worth trying again, especially now that it's covered by insurance.”

Acupuncture can also cure headaches, she says.

Mauskop suggests avoiding foods and beverages that can trigger headaches – like alcohol, chocolate, hard cheese, processed meats and items with MSG and too much caffeine.

If you need to take a pill, he suggests Migralex, a natural non-prescription medication that combines the mineral magnesium and pain-relieving aspirin.

And don't overdo it at the computer. People constantly staring at the screens have a high risk of headaches, he notes.

– LYNN ALLISON

lynnallison@globefl.com

Update

FDA approves new breast cancer drug

➤ **THE FDA** has OK'd the drug Afinitor for use in post-menopausal women fighting breast tumors that have not responded to other medicines. The medication is already used to battle advanced tumors of the kidney and of the nervous-hormone system. “It's exciting there continue to be advances in treating breast cancer,” says Dr. Stephanie Bernik, of New York's Lenox Hill Hospital. “Stabilizing or eradicating the disease may be achievable in our lifetime.”

Musical training can aid healthy aging

➤ **MUSIC** keeps you mentally young and sharp as a tack! Older musicians have a distinct advantage at automatic brain responses over people the same age who don't play instruments. And researchers at the Auditory Neuroscience Lab at Northwestern University discovered the oldsters' reaction times are just as quick as youthful musicians. Says neuroscientist Nina Kraus, “This reinforces the idea that how we experience sound has a profound effect on our nervous system.”

Mediterranean diet for mental health

➤ **A MEDITERRANEAN** diet has long been proven to be healthy for the body, but a new study shows it's good for the soul, too! Eating fish, olive oil, fruits, vegetables, beans and nuts is linked to mental health and quality of life, says a paper published in the European Journal of Clinical Nutrition. In a four-year test, those eating Mediterranean-style scored higher on a quality of life questionnaire for physical and mental well-being than those who don't.