

Mitigation of head and face pain utilizing a specified approach to locate and treat trigger-points found in the cervical musculature

Declaration of interest: none.

Abstract

INTRODUCTION: Headaches are as old as written history yet experts find it difficult to agree on their causes and treatment. Without a clear and demonstrable cause and effect mechanism, the treatment of choice has been primarily the use of analgesics to reduce the symptoms. The purpose this study is to share what has been found to be a recognizable and treatable precipitating factor in the development of chronic headaches, a headache syndrome or simply, chronic head or face pain. This manuscript aims to provide a viable solution to those wishing to gain more control of their pain; exercising an active role in mitigating headache and face pain through the discovery and elimination of trigger-points found in the cervical musculature thus representing the cause and effect mechanism during the treatment process.

OBJECTIVES: In this report, the author will clarify that which defines a trigger-point as it has been well understood within the medical community and the role in which understanding this mechanism plays a role in the treatment of head and face pain. Also, the process of identifying and treating the trigger-point will be explained. Lastly, the intended result will be discussed to demonstrate the efficacy of the method.

METHOD: This discussion is limited to locating trigger-points within [REDACTED] in subjects with active chronic head or face pain. In this process, there is a clearly defined method to identify the location of a trigger-point within these muscles. This process is referred to the STEP Method. Initially, one must locate the presence of a trigger-point; a point in a muscle upon stimulation causing referred pain to the head and/or face. The practitioner [REDACTED] the trigger-point would be considered temporarily eliminated or inactivated. After the procedure, the patient/subject is asked to participate in an assessment to determine any positive or negative results.

RESULTS: When a trigger-point has been found [REDACTED] pain to the head or face subsides or disappears. Results are documented and tallied to determine the efficacy of the process. When all known trigger-points have been eliminated, the STEP method is complete, thus eliminating or inactivating the trigger-points and causing measurable relief from head or face pain.

CONCLUSION: Over time, there have been identified many internal and external environmental factors which have been known to precipitate the development of a headache. Of these, some factors may or may not be under our immediate control. In this study, the author wishes to demonstrate an anatomical factor which can be measurably treated, yet has been relatively overlooked for many years. It has been well demonstrated that the identification and elimination of trigger-points [REDACTED] bring about head

and face pain relief and/or reduce the frequency, duration and intensity of a variety of chronic headache syndromes.

Keywords (5): headache treatments, advances in headache management, treatment for headaches without medication, DIY headache treatment, natural headache remedies

Participant Characteristics

The subjects asked to participate in this trial required the presence of an active headache during the session that was chronic in nature and not as the result of any known injury; physical or chemical in nature. Each participant was required to be from 12 years to 79 years of age in otherwise healthy, ambulatory condition. Each participant was requested to participate in a post trial questionnaire. The terms of the study allowed all participants to remain anonymous.

Trial Design and Outcome Measures

Each subject described their active headache in terms of the location of pain and its level of intensity; utilizing the 11-point scale of 0-10 with 10 being the most intense.

Next, the subject/patient was asked to assume the supine position to be examined. A standard protocol referred to as the STEP Method was used to evaluate for the presence of trigger-points

[REDACTED]

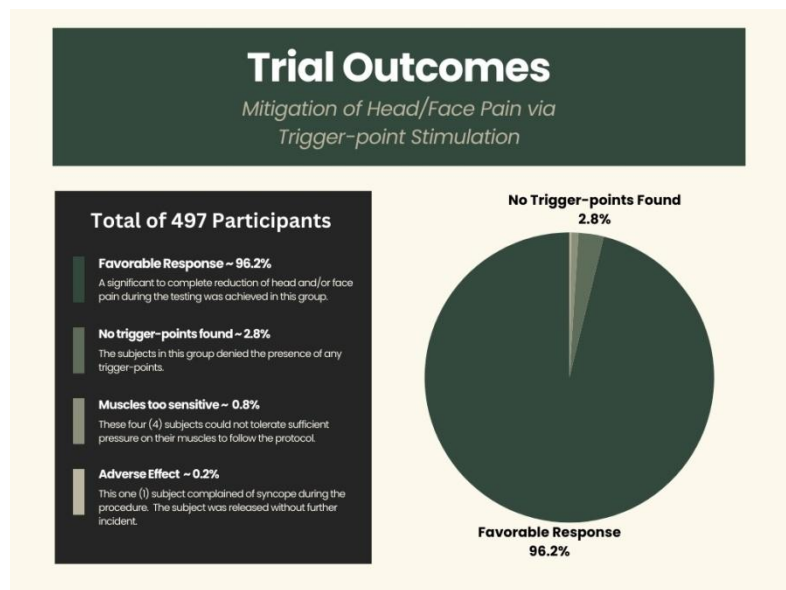
As such, one would [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] This typically takes less than one minute. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



As a direct result, this trigger-point would be considered temporarily eliminated or inactivated when there is no more pain elicited. In the absence of a trigger-point, the examiner [REDACTED] until no more trigger-points remain active or produce referred pain to the head or face.

For this trial, a total of 512 subjects were examined and/or treated using this method from October 1979 through May 2023. Results were tallied over time and stored digitally.

Of the combined 512 participants, 497 completed the post-trial questionnaire.

Of the 497 who successfully completed the post-trial questionnaire, 478 subjects reported a reduction in head and face pain via the utilization of [REDACTED]. Of those tallied, there were 14 subjects who denied the presence of any trigger-points.

Adverse Effects of Trial

Of those remaining, 4 subjects could not tolerate any pressure along the muscles tested and one (1) subject felt mild syncope during trigger-point stimulation, therefore the procedure was terminated immediately and the participant was examined and release in stable condition shortly thereafter.

Known Latent Effects of Trial

Of the 478 participants who reported favorable results, approximately 47% or 233 were surveyed 90 days post trial and reported no side effects from the trial. Of the 233, 32% (75) claimed never to have another significant headache after the study.

Discussion

Headaches are one of the most frequent reasons for patients seeking medical care. When it comes to pain, headaches rank number one among adults. That is more than any other pain including back aches, joint pain and muscle soreness. Approximately 47 million Americans suffer from migraine headaches alone. Unfortunately, the problem affects more than the headache sufferer alone. Spouses of chronic headache sufferers reportedly feel helpless during an event, children often feel neglected and studies show that on-the-job productivity declines thus affecting everybody.

Nearly 27 million adults missed one or more days due to headache pain causing an annualized loss of productivity to be well over \$8 billion. More than \$4 billion is spent annually on over-the-counter pain medication primarily for headache relief. Incidentally, an overuse of NSAIDs often results in more headaches. This is a well known phenomenon in medicine referred to as rebound headaches. As such, headaches continue to be a serious problem.

This study clearly demonstrates the causal relationship of trigger-points in the development and persistence of chronic headache pain. Of significant importance, it should be noted that any treatment method shown to be effective, that can be self-administered, requiring no tools or medication would be of great value to the global population.

In conclusion, 96.2% of those tested, presented favorable results without side effects or any other negative results. In other words, when trigger-points were eliminated, head and face pain was improved. The STEP Method is highly structured and well documented. As such, this method is easy to learn and will benefit headache sufferers. Therefore, one might consider this approach as a viable alternative to over-the-counter medications or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) as the treatment of choice for chronic headaches.