

Pathogenesis and TCM Treatment of the Headaches

East West Healing Center

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Definition:

Headache is a disease, and a symptom also. It caused by different reasons, and may occur on one or both sides of the head, radiate across the head from one point. The headache may appear as a sharp pain, a throbbing sensation or a dull ache. The headaches can develop gradually or suddenly, and may last from less than an hour to several days.

Primary Headaches

A primary headache is caused by over activity of or problems with pain sensitive structures in the head.

- ① chemical activity in the brain
- ② nerves or blood vessels surrounding the skull
- ③ muscles of the head and neck
- ④ family history

Primary Headaches (cont.)

- Tension headaches
- Migraines
- Cluster headache
- Vascular headache
- Trigeminal autonomic cephalalgia (TAC)
- Chronic daily headaches
- Cough headaches
- Exercise headaches

Secondary Headaches

A secondary headache is a symptom of a disease that can activate the pain sensitive nerves of the head. Any number of conditions may cause secondary headaches.

- More usual causes of secondary headaches:

- ① Concussion
- ② Dehydration
- ③ Dental problems
- ④ Ear infection (middle ear)
- ⑤ Sinusitis
- ⑥ Cold or Flu
- ⑦ Medications
- ⑧ Panic attacks
- ⑨ Shingles headaches
- ⑩ Rebound headaches
- ⑪ Spinal headaches

- More serious causes of secondary headaches:

- ① Meningitis (脑膜炎)
- ② Bleeding inside the brain (颅内出血)
- ③ Subarachnoid hemorrhage (蛛网膜下腔出血)
- ④ Brain tumor (脑肿瘤)
- ⑤ Temporal arteritis (颞动脉炎)
- ⑥ Acute angle closure glaucoma (急性闭角型青光眼)
- ⑦ Seizure (癫痫)
- ⑧ Carbon monoxide poisoning (一氧化碳中毒)

About the Headaches in TCM

The head is the highest point of all Yang. The brain is the house of the soul and the seat of consciousness. The head is the convergence of the essence of the blood and qi of the five zhang organs and six fu organs. The head connects and control whole body.

If the Qi in the meridians are blocked by external factors, headache is the result. Internal causes include: deficiency of Qi or blood, stagnation of phlegm that can block the meridians, or damaged by excess of the emotions, or liver fire flaring up. All these reasons may cause the headaches also.

Usually, in TCM has four patterns on headaches, as YangMing, ShaoYang, TaiYang, JueYin.

Yang Ming Headaches (阳明头痛)

Yang Ming headache is located in the frontal region of the head that includes the forehead and eyebrows area. The sensation are often described as head, red eyes, fever, etc.

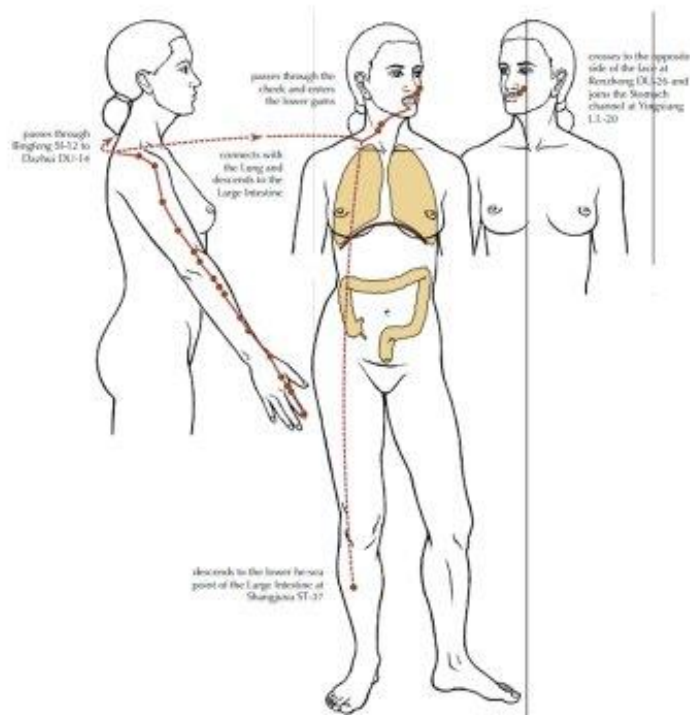
Patterns of TCM : wind cold, damp heat. The tongue is yellow and dry or white, pulse is big and forceful or floating and fast . The pattern is true heat.

Type of headaches:

- Sinus Headaches
- Cold or Flu

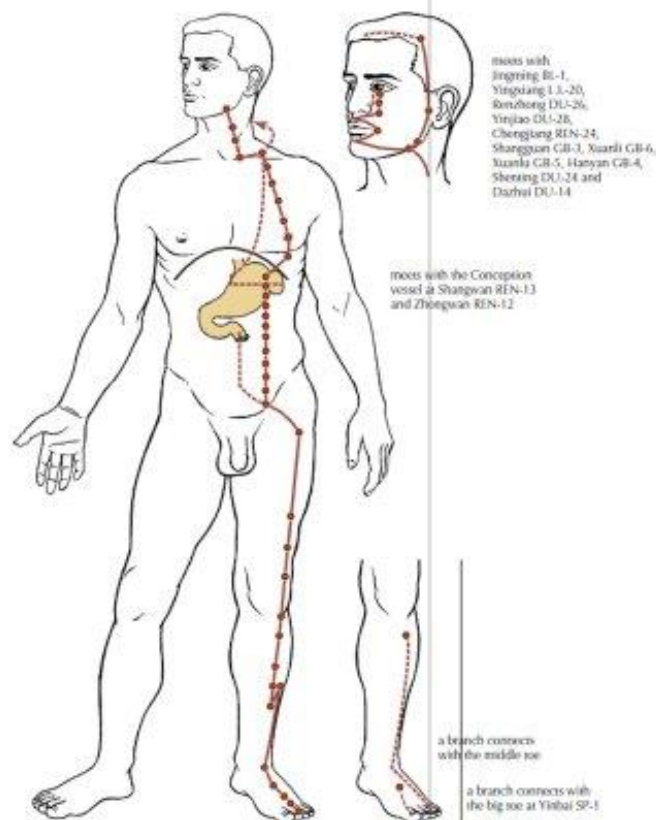
yang Min - Bright Yang

THE LARGE INTESTINE CHANNEL OF HAND YANGMING



The Large Intestine primary channel

THE STOMACH CHANNEL OF FOOT YANGMING



Treatment: Clear Yang Ming heat

1, Formula: Bai Hu Tang Modified (白虎汤加減)

葛根15克, 升麻5克, 白芷9克, 生石膏30克, 知母10克, 炒粳米15克, 生甘草5克。

Ge Gen 15g, Sheng Ma 5g, Bai Zhi 9g, Shi Gao 30g, Zhi Mu 10g, Geng Mi 15g, Gan Cao 5g

2, Acupuncture:

DU 23 (上星穴)、GB 14 (阳白穴)、EX- HN 3 (YinTang 印堂穴), BL 2 (攒竹), LI 4 (合谷), LI 20 (迎香), ST 41 (解溪)。

ShaoYang Headaches (少阳头痛)

Shao Yang headache is pain at the side of the head (temporal area) including the root of the ears and hairline (sides). Pain is both acute and alternates between sensation of cold and heat. Sensation of chest tightness. Bitter taste in mouth, dizziness.

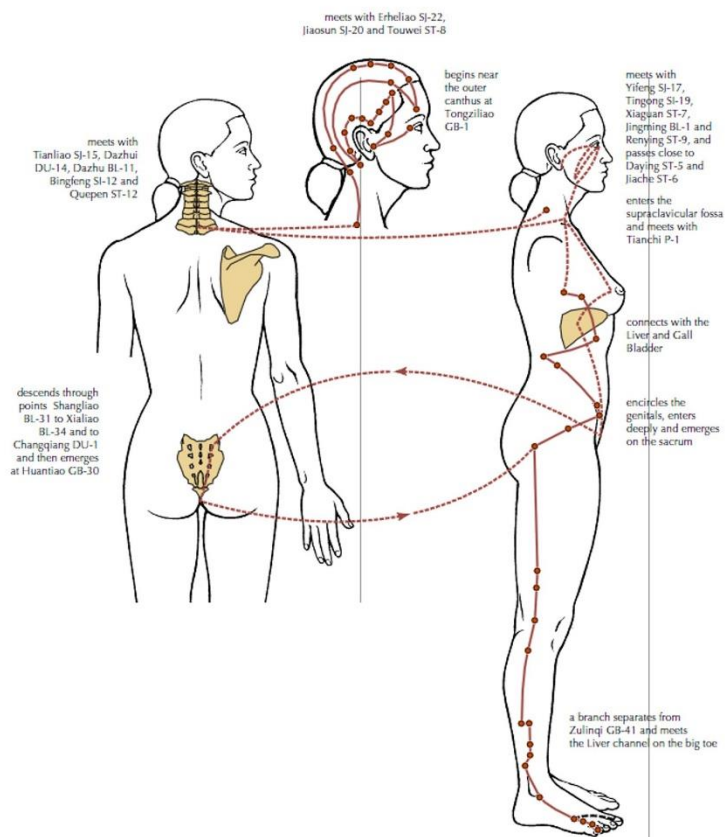
Patterns of TCM : liver fire flaring up, stagnated heat of liver channel. Pulse is long and thin. Tongue is red with thin yellow coat.

Type of headaches:

- Migraine headache
- Tension headaches
- Cluster headaches

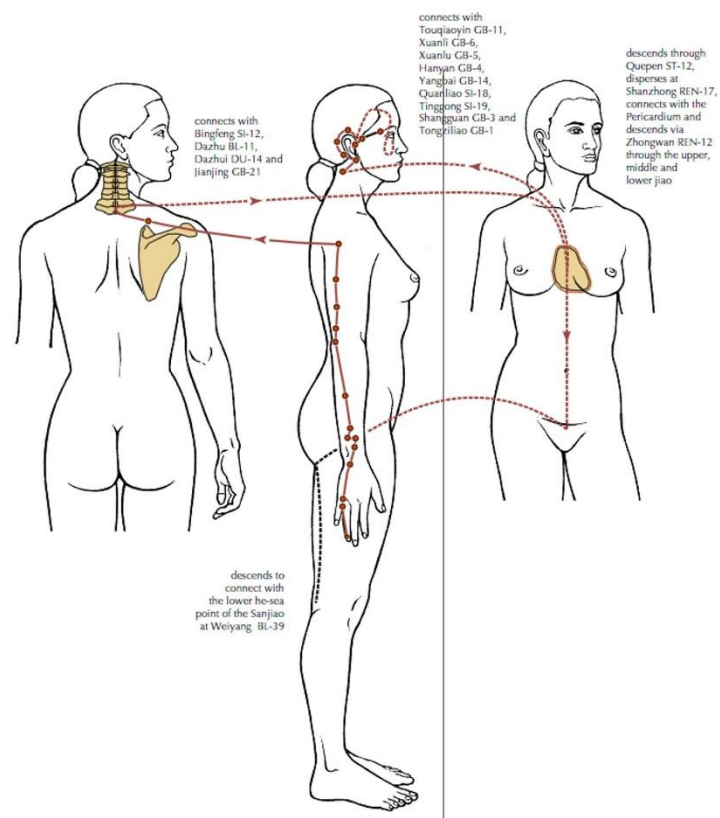
Shao Yang - Lesser Yang

THE GALL BLADDER CHANNEL OF FOOT SHAOYANG



The Gall Bladder primary channel

THE SANJIAO CHANNEL OF HAND SHAOYANG



The Sanjiao primary channel

Treatment: Harmonize exterior and interior, Clear heat

1, Formula: Xiao Chai Hu Tang Modified (小柴胡汤加减)

柴胡10克, 黄芩6克, 党参10克, 姜半夏10克, 炙甘草5克, 蔓荆子10克, 藁本10克。

Chai Hu 10g, Huang Qin 6g, Dang Shen 10g, Ban Xia 10g, Gan Cao 5g, Man Jing Zi 10g, Gao Ben 10g

2, Acupuncture:

GB 20 (风池)、GB 8 (率谷)、SJ 15 (天髎), SJ 5 (外关)、GB 43 (侠溪)、GB 34 (阳陵泉)。

Tai Yang Headaches (太阳头痛)

Tai Yang headache is often at the back of the head (occipital area), including the neck and shoulders.

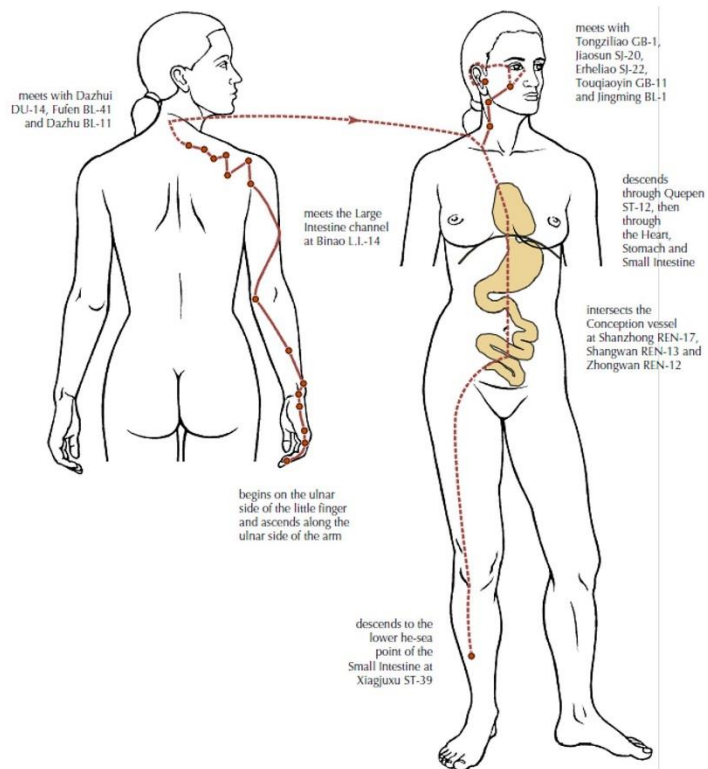
Patterns of TCM : wind-cold or wind-heat. Pulse is floating or tight pulse. Tongue is pale or red.

Type of headaches:

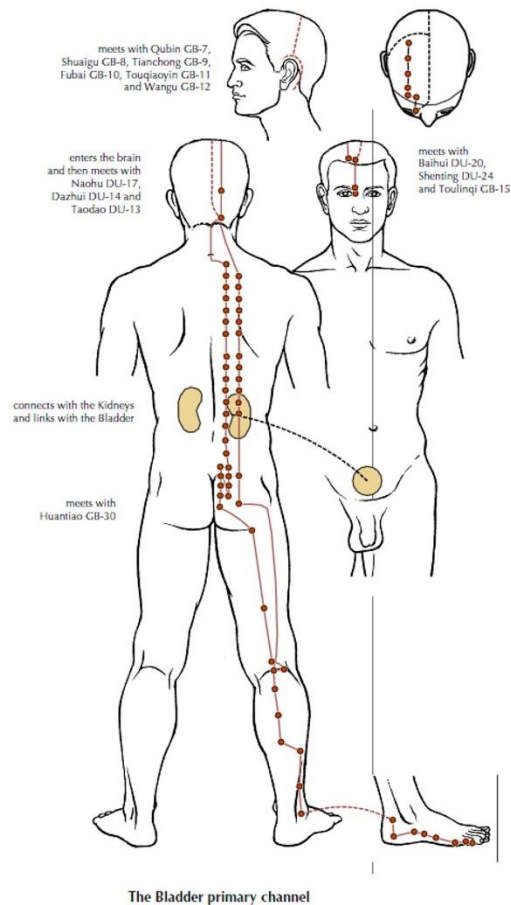
- Tension headache
- Spinal headaches
- Cold or flu

Tai Yang - Greater Yang

THE SMALL INTESTINE CHANNEL OF HAND TAIYANG



THE BLADDER CHANNEL OF FOOT TAIYANG



Treatment: Clear wind heat and eliminate wind cold.

1, Formula: Qiang Huo Fang Feng Tang (羌活防风汤)

羌活6克, 防风6克, 蔓荆子10克, 藁本10克, 川芎5克, 甘草3克

Qiang Huo 6g, Fang Feng 6g, Man Jing Zi 10g, Gao Ben 10g,
Chuan Xiong 5g, Gan Cao 3g

2, Acupuncture:

BL 10 (天柱)、SI 3 (后溪)、BL 60 (昆仑)、BL 9
(玉枕)、BL 65 (束骨)

Jue Yin Headaches (厥阴头痛)

Jue Yin headache is mainly pain at the top of the head, and eye area, desire to vomit but unable expel or spitting white foam, dizziness.

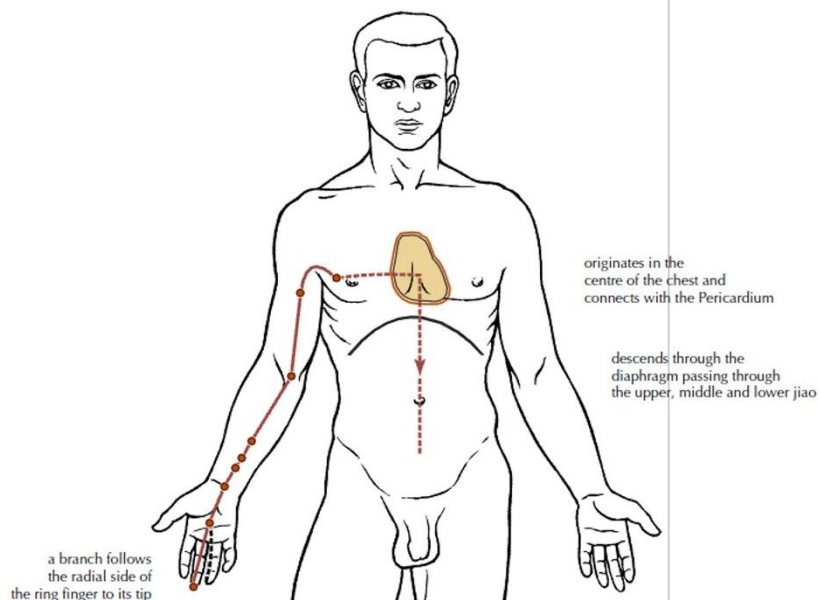
Patterns of TCM : stagnation of liver qi. Pulse is slow thready and stringy. Tongue is white and slippery fur.

Type of headaches:

- Migraine
- Concussion
- Cluster headaches
- Seizure
- Tension headache

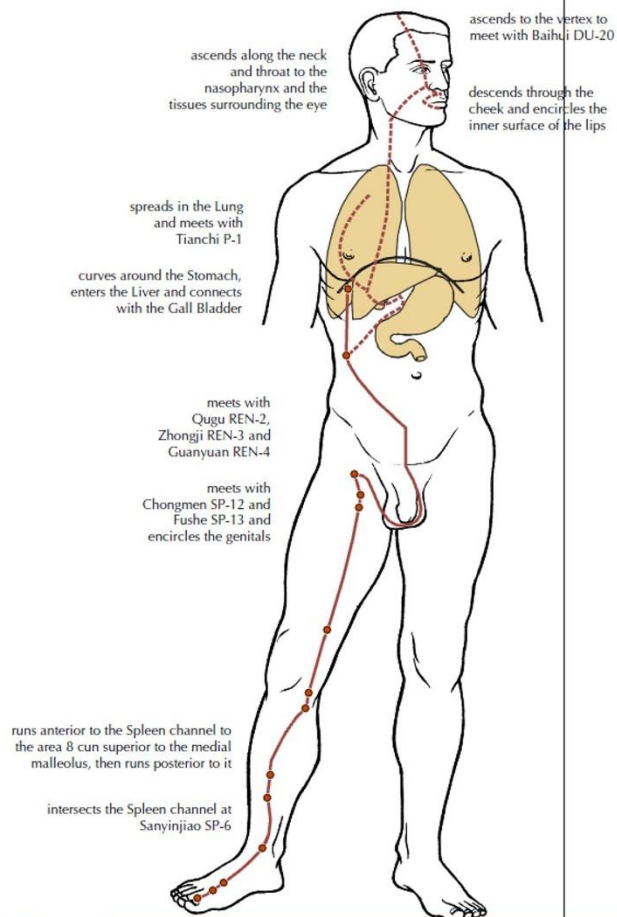
Jue Yin - Terminal Yin

THE PERICARDIUM CHANNEL OF HAND JUEYIN



The Pericardium primary channel

THE LIVER CHANNEL OF FOOT JUEYIN



Treatment: warm jue yin and moving Qi

1, Formula: Wu Zhu Yu Tang Modified (吴茱萸汤加減).

吴茱萸6克, 生姜10克, 姜半夏10克, 藁本10克, 党参15克, 炙甘草3克。

Wu Zhu Yu 6g, Sheng Jiang 10g, Ban Xia 10g, Gao Ben 10g, Dang Shen 15g, Gan Cao 3g.

2, Acupuncture:

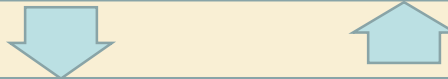
DU 20 (百会)、EX- HN 1 (SiShenCong 四神聪)、GB 20 (风池), DU 21 (前顶), LR 3 (太冲)、BL 18 (肝俞)、PC 6 (内关)

Tension Headache

Tension headache is a primary headache and most common type of headache. They feel like a constant ache or pressure around the head, especially at the temples or back of the head and neck. Not as severe as migraines, they don't usually cause nausea or vomiting, and they rarely halt daily activities, doesn't run in families. Women are twice as likely to get them as men, most in the adult.

Pathogenesis

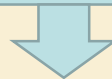
The neck muscles tighten up (spasm) to make misaligned vertebrae



Misaligned vertebrae sends warning signals to the neck muscles to tighten up



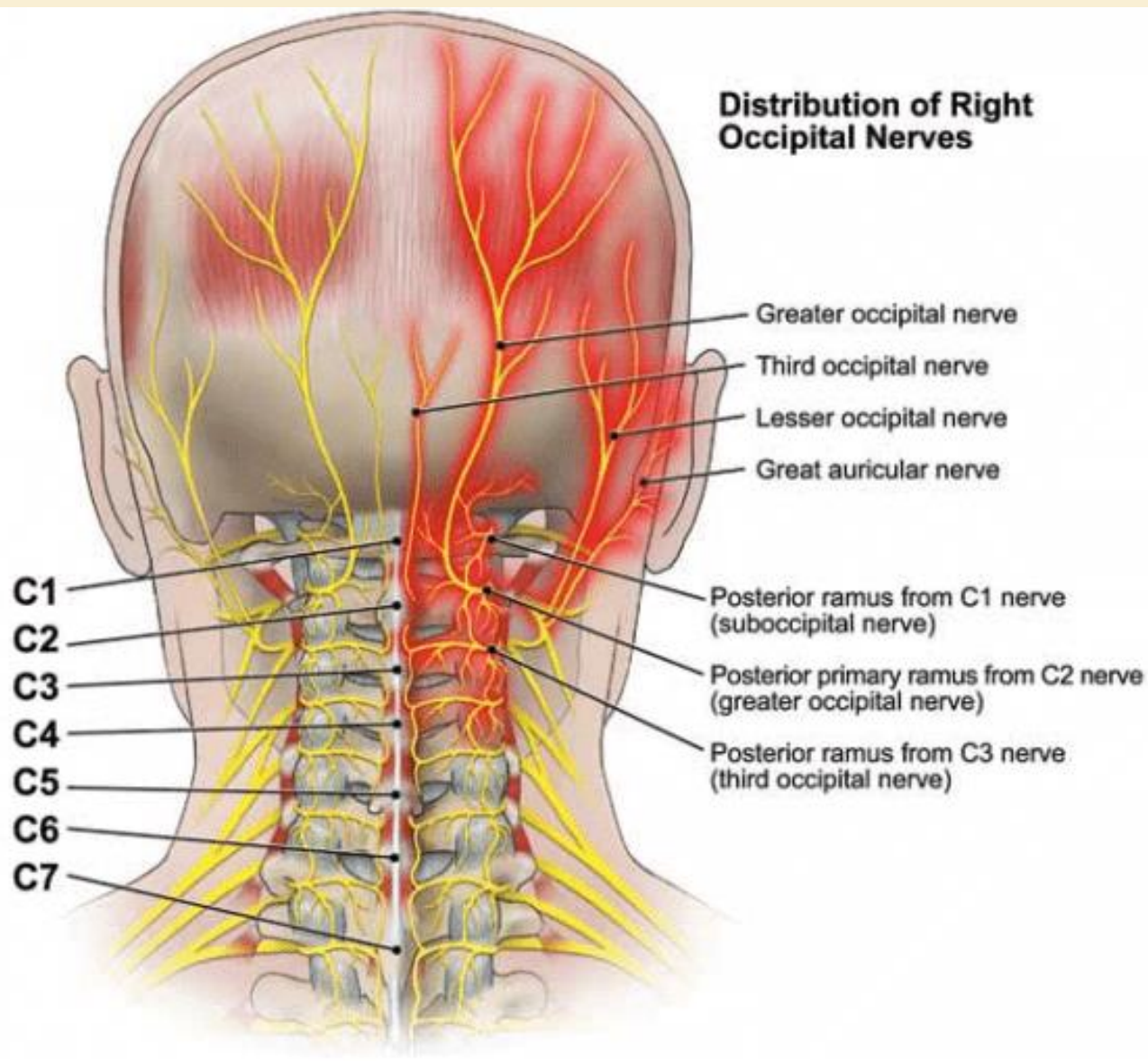
That irritates underlying nerves in neck and send warning signals up to the head muscles, then respond by tightening up suddenly

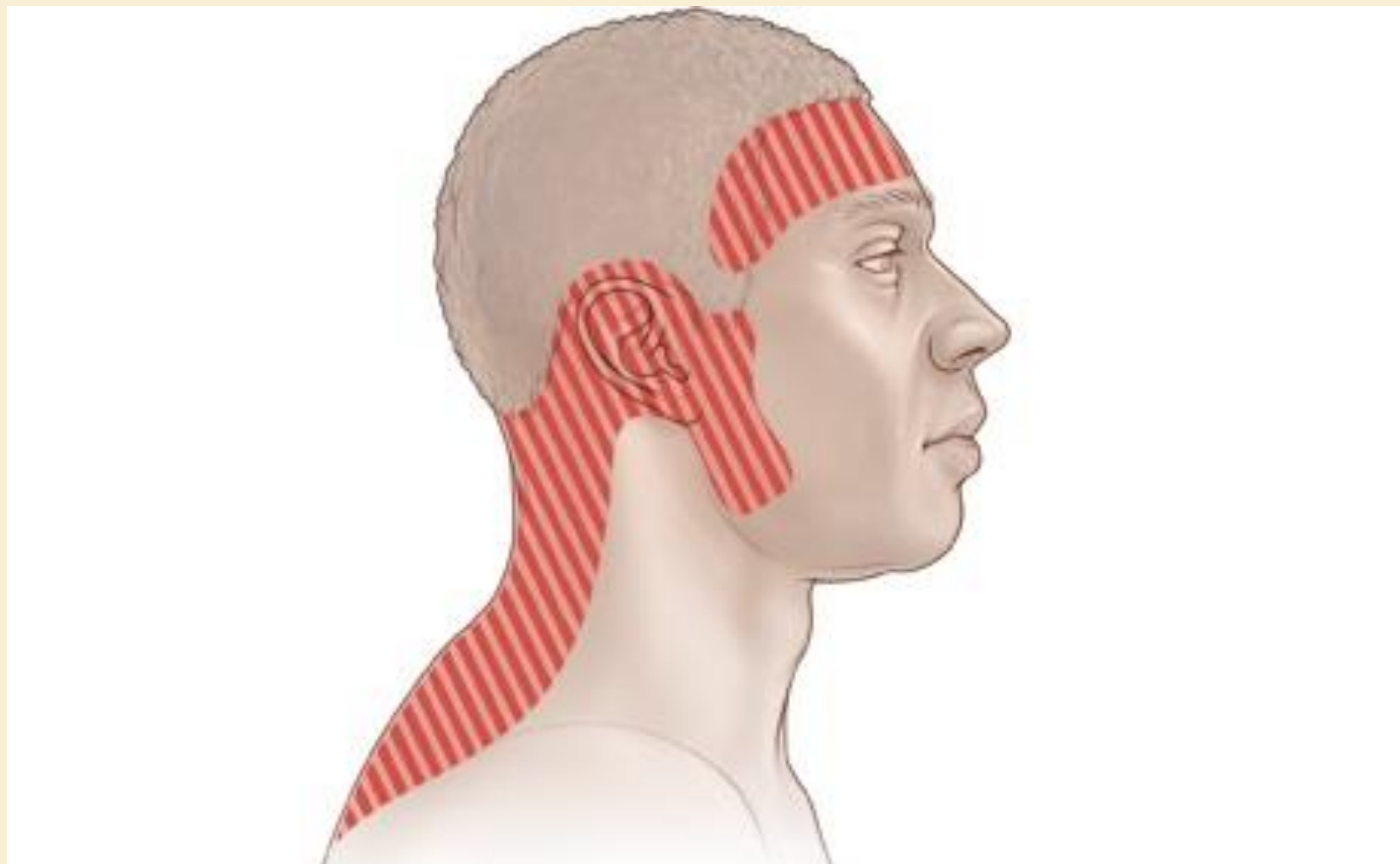


These tightening muscles create a chain reaction spasm encircling the head



Tension headache





Causes

Bad posture
Over activity
Stress
Depression
Anxiety
Fatigue
Low iron levels

Symptoms

- Mild to moderate headache
- The pain can radiate from the upper back, neck, shoulders, above the eyes, around the ears.
- Headache that starts later in the day
- Pulsing sensation
- Trouble sleeping
- Feeling very tired
- Irritability
- Trouble focusing
- Mild sensitivity to light or noise

Diagnosis

Blood tests: negative or may low iron

X-ray: may have misaligned on cervical vertebrae

MRI: may have the herniated disc

CT scan: negative on the brain and sinuses

Medication treatment (anti-inflammatory)

Adjustment manipulations

Migraine

A migraine can cause severe throbbing pain or a pulsing sensation, usually on just one side of the head. It's often accompanied by nausea, vomiting, and extreme sensitivity to light and sound.

It most often starts at puberty and is worst during middle age, may have family history, and women are three times more than men.

Pathogenesis

Environment, emotion and genetic factors



Increase serotonin (5-hydroxytryptamine)



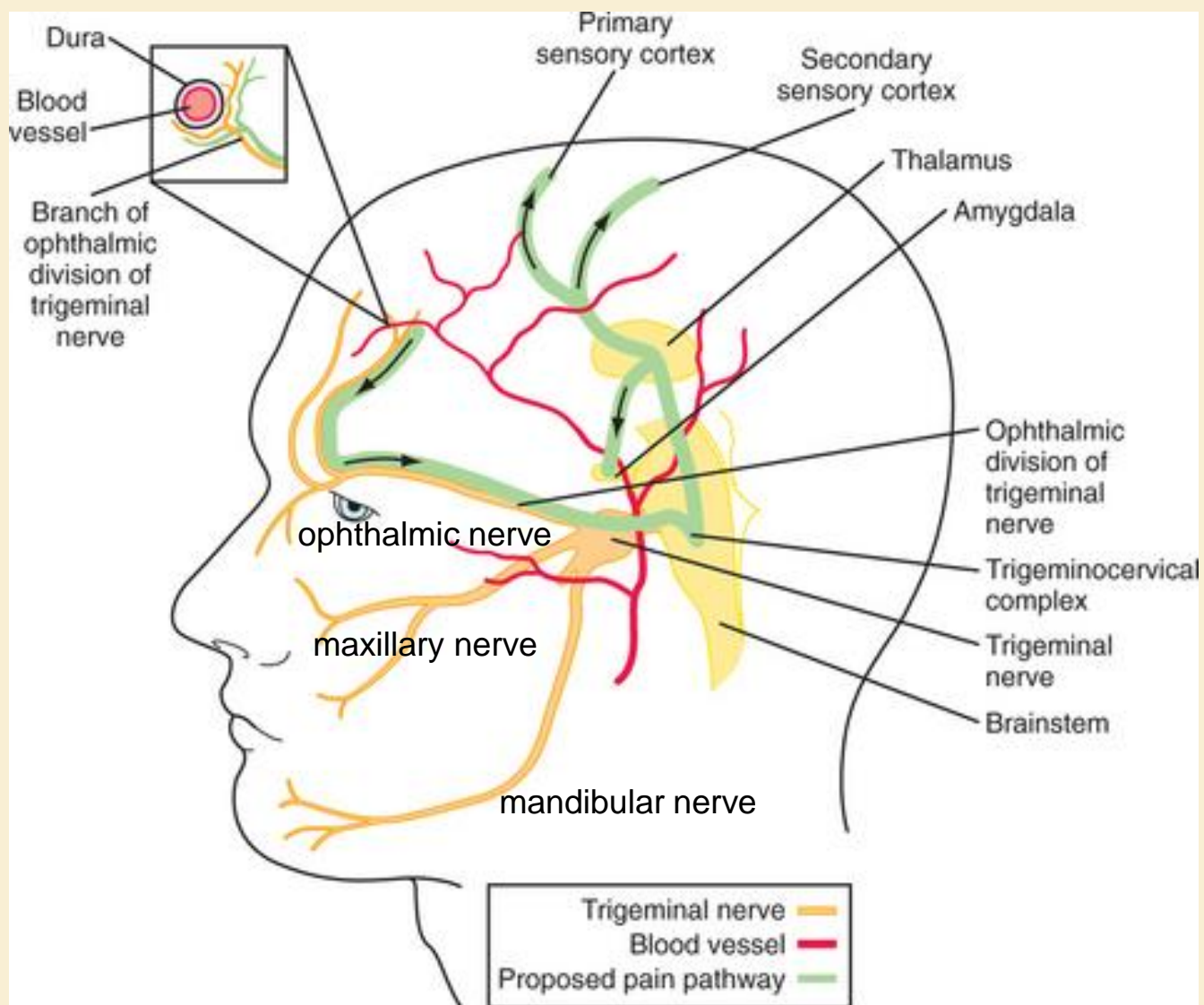
Irritated trigeminal nerve and constricts cranial vessels



Local hypoxia



Migraine



Causes

Hormonal changes

Foods

Drinks

Stress

Sensory stimuli

Changes in wake-sleep pattern

Physical factors

Changes in the environment

Medications

Symptoms

- Headache lasts from 4 to 72 hours if untreated
- Pain on one side or both sides of the head
- Pain that feels throbbing or pulsing
- Sensitivity to light, sounds, and sometimes smells
- Nausea and vomiting
- Blurred vision
- Lightheadedness or fainting

Diagnosis

Blood tests

MRI

CT scan

Spinal tap (lumbar puncture)

Migraine medication, Botox injection, block trigeminal nerve

Sinus Headache

Sinus headache is an infection in the sinuses (sinusitis) that causes may feel pressure or pain around eyes, cheeks and forehead.

However, many people who have headaches of the sinusitis, but may have migraines or tension headaches at same time, so that we need to differentiate diagnosis.

Pathogenesis

The sinuses are air-filled spaces inside forehead, cheekbones, and behind the bridge of the nose. When they get inflamed -- usually because of an **allergic reaction** or an **infection** -- they swell, make more mucus, and the channels that drain them can get blocked.

HEALTHY SINUS

额窦

Frontal Sinus

蝶窦

Sphenoid Sinus

Ethmoid Sinus

筛窦

Septum

Maxillary Sinus

上颌窦

SINUSITIS

Inflamed Sinus Lining

Excess Mucus/
Sinus Infection

Causes

Sinusitis usually causes by a viral upper respiratory infection or cold or allergy, occurs the thick mucus, decreased sense of smell, and pain in one cheek or upper teeth or forehead.

Sinus headaches are may associated with migraines or other forms of headaches.

Symptoms

- Pain, pressure and fullness in the cheeks, brow or forehead
- Worsening pain if you bend forward or lie down
- Stuffy nose
- Fatigue
- Achy feeling in your upper teeth
- No or may little nausea or vomiting or aggravated by noise or bright light.

Diagnosis

CT scan

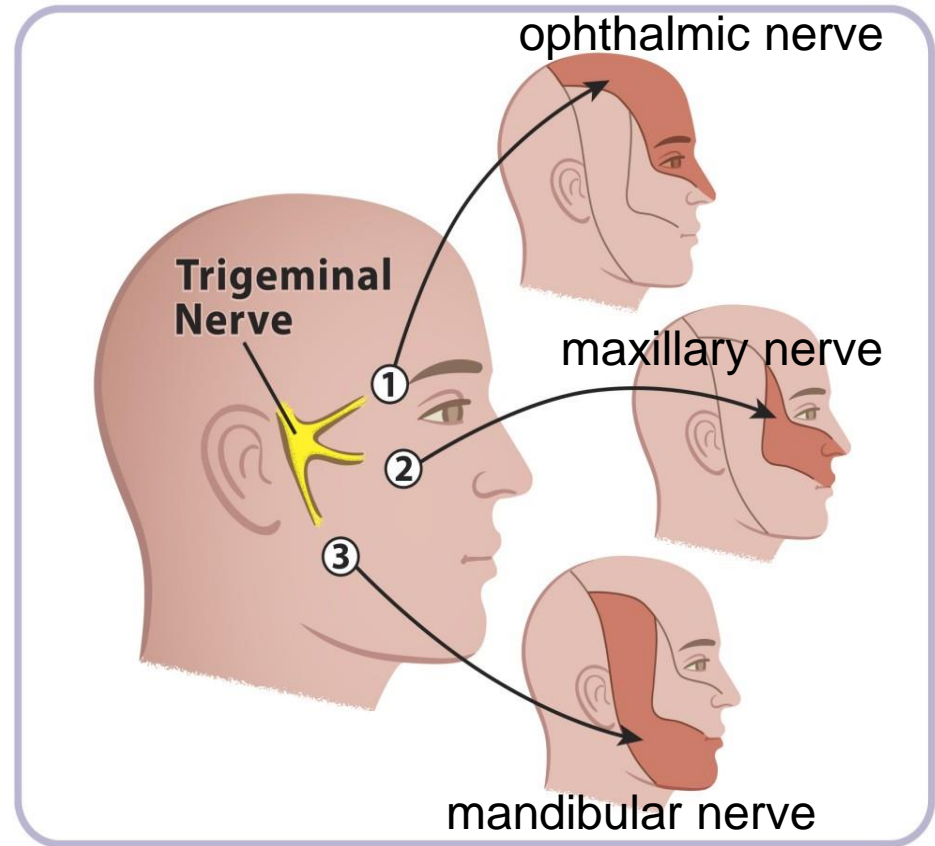
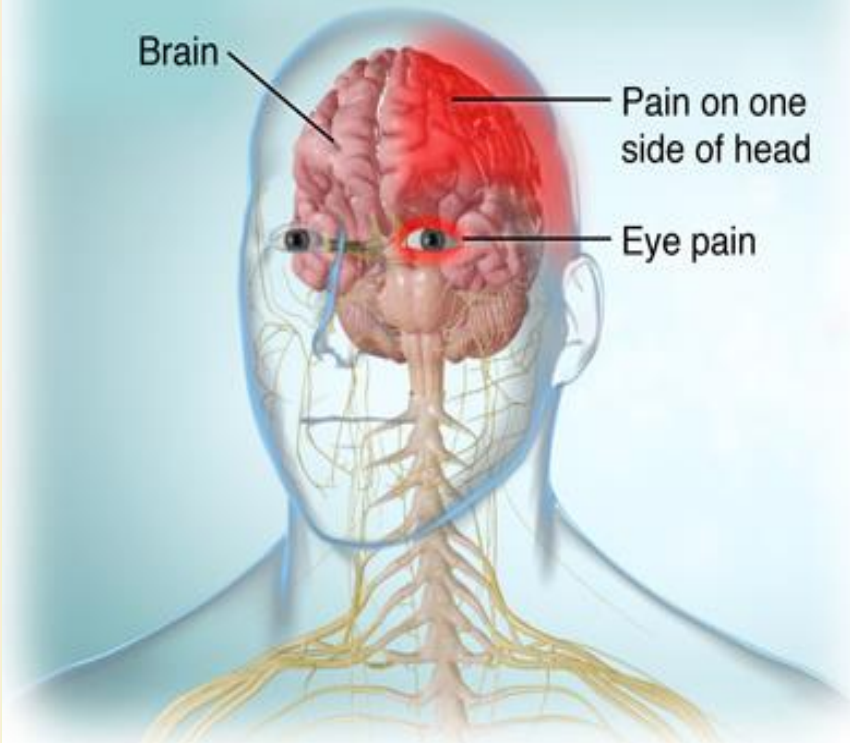
Blood test

Antibiotic treatment

Cluster Headaches

The cause of cluster headaches is unknown, but that may relate to factors of environment, emotion or genetic. It is one of the most painful types of headaches. A cluster headache commonly awake up in the middle of the night with intense pain in or around one eye on one side of the head, and is rare and not life-threatening.

Cluster headache



Causes

Men are more than women

Age 20 to 50

Environment

Emotion

Smoking

Alcohol

Stress

Family history

Symptoms

- Excruciating pain around one eye, but may radiate to other areas of the face, head, neck and shoulders
- One-sided pain
- Restlessness
- Tearing
- Red eye or swelling eye
- Stuffy or runny nose
- Forehead or facial sweating
- Flushing on the face

Diagnosis

CT scan

MIR

Opium medication or migraine medication, block trigeminal nerve

	Tension headache	Migraine	Sinus Headache*	Cluster headache
age	adult	puberty to middle	any age	20- 50
gender	women 2 time than men	women 3 time than men	both	men more than women
causes	Stress, bad posture, low iron levels	environmental, sensory stimuli, hormone,	allergic reaction or an infection	Smoking, alcohol, stress,
test	Blood negative, X-ray, MRI negative	Blood negative, MRI may positive	Blood may positive, CT scan positive	Blood negative, X-ray, MRI negative
symptom	moderate headache, neck or shoulder, eyes, ears, tired	Pain on one side or both sides of the head, throbbing or pulsing, Sensitivity to light, sounds, nausea and vomiting	Pain and pressure on forehead or cheeks, Stuffy nose	Excruciating pain around one eye or face, swelling

Chen's experience of Treatments on the Headaches

1. Differential diagnosis: look, listen, smell, asking, test

- ① How long has been the pain? How often get the pain?
What kind the pain? Where is the pain?
- ② What treatment or medications you had before?
- ③ Family? What test you have?
- ④ Locate the pain spots.
- ⑤ Pulse and tongue.

2. Herbal formulas:

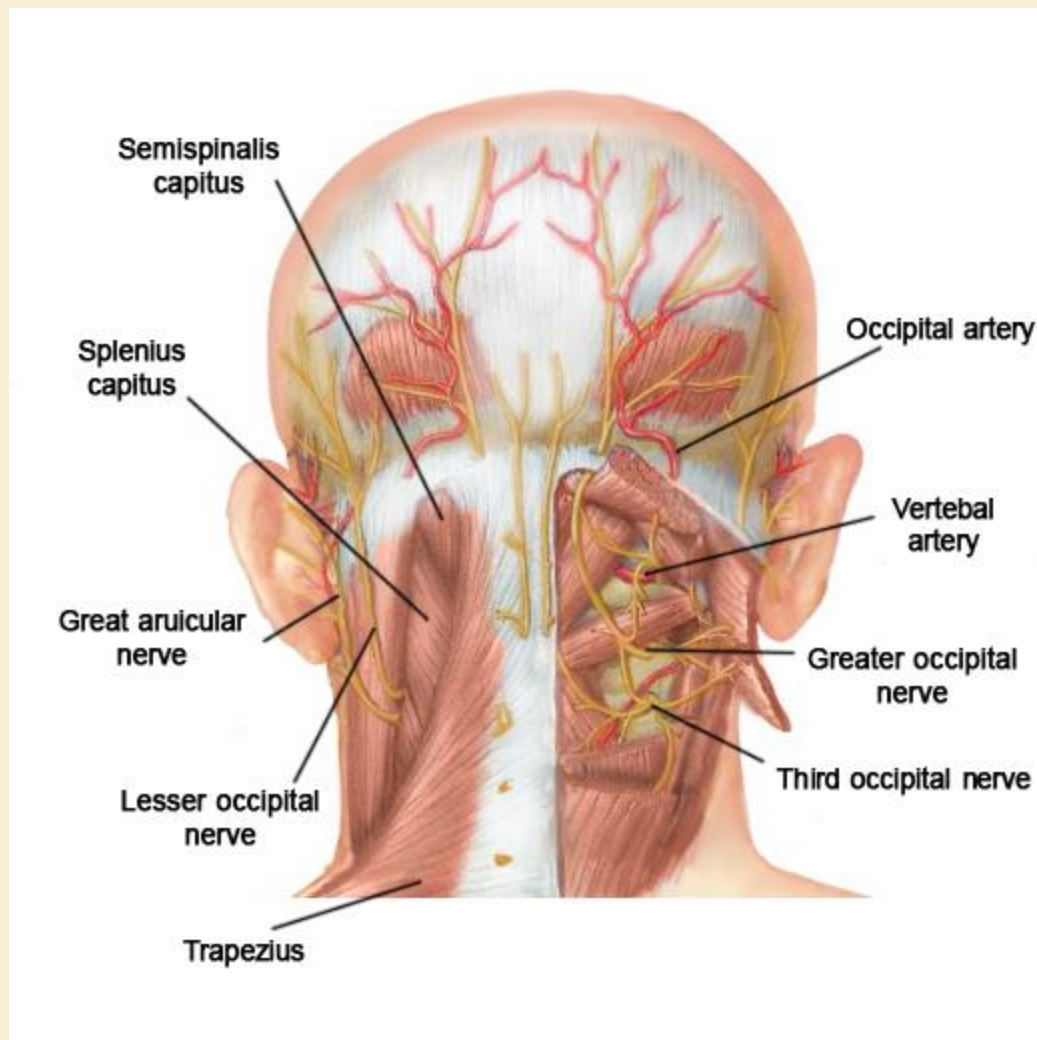
- ① ShaoYang Headaches (少阳头痛): Xiao Chai Hu Tang Modified (小柴胡汤加減)
- ② Tai Yang headache (太阳头痛): Qiang Huo Fang Feng Tang (羌活防风汤)
- ③ Jue Yin headache (厥阴头痛): Wu Zhu Yu Tang Modified (吴茱萸汤加減)
- ④ Yang Ming headache (阳明头痛): Bai Hu Tang Modified (白虎汤加減)
- ⑤ Fang Feng Tong Sheng Wan (防风通圣丸)
- ⑥ Tian Ma Gou Ting Wan (天麻钩藤丸)

3. Acupuncture (or electrical acupuncture)

- Main points: GB 20 (风池), BL 13 (肺腧), LI 4 (合谷)
- Assisted points:
 - ① Frontal headache: EX- HN3 (YinTang印堂), ST 8(头维), ST 44 (内廷)
 - ② Migraine: EX- HN 5 (TaiYang 太阳), GB 8 (率谷), SJ 5 (外关)
 - ③ Headache at top of head: DU 20 (百会), EX-HN 1 (SiShenCong 四神聪), LR 3 (太冲), BL 7 (通天)
 - ④ Headache at back of head: BL 10 (天柱), DU 16 (风府), SI 3 (后溪)
- Option points: Fever -- DU 14 (大椎), LI 11 (曲池); Nausea – PC 6 (内关), RN 12 (中脘); Dizziness – SP 6 (三阴交), LR2 (行间), KI 3 (太溪)

Anatomy of the point

GB 20 (风池) :
In the superficial layer is trapezius muscles and lesser occipital nerve and veins. In the deep layer is splenius capitis, semispinalis capitis and occipital artery, greater occipital nerve.



4. Tuina

- Acupressure -- GB 20 (风池), BL 10 (天柱), BL 13 (肺腧), BL12 (风门), BL 11 (大杼), SI 10 (臑腧), SJ 15 (天髎), EX-B2 (HuaTuoJiaJi 华佗夹脊)
- Massage on the neck, shoulder blade
- Adjustment of the cervical and shoulders.

5. Guasha

6. Cupping

7. Cold pad and heating pad

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