

Headache Research Report

II. Edgar Cayce's Perspective On Headaches

In general, the Edgar Cayce readings that discuss the various manifestations of headache are consistent with the conceptual and linguistic forms of Cayce's era, especially the classification systems that focus on etiology and pathophysiology as essential criteria for diagnosis. Some important themes emerge from a study of the Cayce readings involving headache.

- *Headache can have many causes.* Cayce's holistic perspective recognizes physical, mental and spiritual dimensions in the etiology of headache. Even at a strictly physical level, there are numerous pathophysiological processes that can lead to headache.
- *The cause of headache is usually peripheral.* Organic disease involving the head or brain is relatively rare in the Cayce readings on headache. Although almost any organ system can be a source of headache, most often certain peripheral systems such as the digestive system, reproductive system, hepatic system, and especially the autonomic nervous system were cited by Cayce as causal factors for headache.
- *Headache can serve as a window into underlying patterns of systemic dysfunction.* The various features of headache such as type and location can be indicative of the organ systems involved in headache. Understanding headache can provide valuable clues to the causes and treatment of primary medical conditions that are otherwise difficult to diagnose. Patient's presenting with "dis-ease" rather than clearly defined "disease" fall into this category.
- *Comprehensive treatment that addresses primary causes is desirable.* The Cayce readings on headache provide a wide variety of relatively noninvasive and potentially effective treatments for headaches and the systemic dysfunction of which they are a manifestation. The Cayce approach focuses on the possibility of cure by removal of cause rather than symptom suppression.
- *The relationship between cause and effect is sometimes complex.* Many readings that discuss headache utilize a complex systems approach that recognizes various causal factors and physiological processes within the same individual. For example, a case involving "bilious" headache may also present with significant gastric dysfunction, toxic bowel, spinal nerve reflexes and vasomotor disturbance. So to classify the headache as any one of these "types" would be misleading. Thus there is an emphasis on identifying the *primary* etiological or pathophysiological factor so as to distinguish *cause* from *effect*. With these general observations in mind, here is a deeper analysis of these themes.

A. Causes of Headache

Edgar Cayce mentioned many causes of headaches in reading 3329-1:

For, when there are any types of headaches (and they may arise from many sources) there is distress somewhere in the physical being of the body that is the source of the cause of same. One may have a type of headache from a stomach ailment, another may be from poor

Headache Research Report

digestion or poor eliminations; and these apparently cause pressures in varied portions of the head - or the reflex nerves of the brain center itself.

Here we have a type that is sometimes called migraine, or that really means "we don't know the source of same. (3329-1)

This quotes reinforces several important themes:

- There are many causes of headaches;
- The distress may originate anywhere in the body;
- The various types of headache often relate to the organ system or pathophysiological pattern from which they originate;
- The pathophysiology usually involves nerve reflexes that transfer the distress to the head or brain;
- Due to the complex nature of the etiological and pathophysiological process, various diagnostic labels are assigned to headache without a clear understanding of the source of the condition.

1. Nerve Reflexes

The most consistent pathophysiological feature of headache described by Cayce is role of nerve reflexes that serve as the link between primary cause (usually peripheral) and eventual effect (head pain). The hallmark of the Cayce perspective on this topic is the complexity of the nerve reflex patterns. Relatively simple models of spinal injury (subluxation or osteopathic lesion) resulting directly in nerve reflexes to the head and headache can be found in the historic and modern literature. In some readings, Cayce also identified simple nerve reflex patterns.

More often, Cayce described complex reflex patterns, both somato-visceral and viscerosomatic. So rather than pressure on a spinal nerve directly causing headache, the reflex pattern might be to a visceral organ (particularly stomach, liver or womb) producing pathology at the peripheral organ level. Then nerve reflexes back to the spinal center would be translated to the head. In many reading, there was no initial spinal pathology – the problem began with the visceral organ.

Whatever the origin of the pathology, the most common pathway of nerve reflex was to the upper thoracic and cervical centers of the spine and thence to the head. The parasympathic (pneumogastric/vagal and hypogastric) nerves were cited by Cayce as the most common conduit from the viscera to the upper spinal centers. In some readings, sympathetic reflexes (usually secondary cardiac from the upper portion of the stomach) were noted as the connection with the spinal centers. These autonomic reflexes were linked to common headache symptoms such as nausea and nervous indigestion.

When the nerve reflex pattern affected the fifth cranial nerve (trigeminal), the headache was often identified as migraine, consistent with the modern recognition of migraine as a neurovascular headache (see Appendix D).

Vasomotor disturbances were mentioned in many headache readings. As before, the reflex patterns affecting vasomotor centers in the upper thoracic and cervical were usually implicated in such cases.

Headache Research Report

2. Visceral Dysfunction in Headache

Several common patterns of visceral dysfunction were consistently cited in the Cayce readings involving headache. Here are some of the most frequent patterns of dysfunction:

- Toxic bowel
- Torpid (sluggish) liver
- Menstrual and pelvic dysfunction
- Gastric dysfunction (including abnormal stomach position and gastric hyperacidity or hypoacidity)

The question as to whether headaches produced by these etiological patterns would be considered as *secondary* by modern criteria is important. If the *primary* medical condition were severe enough to be diagnosed, probably so. If however, the dysfunction was subclinical or not recognized as a medical condition, probably not. For example, serious liver disease (such as cirrhosis) would likely be diagnosed as *primary* and associated headache as *secondary*. A sluggish liver may not be diagnosed as a medical problem and associated headaches would be viewed as idiopathic and *primary*. Furthermore, conditions produced by leaky gut syndrome, lacteal duct adhesions and abnormal stomach position would probably never be diagnosed by most allopathic physicians. Thus, the Cayce readings on headache do not easily translate into the modern headache classification scheme. Yet the Cayce perspective could contribute significantly to an understanding of why most headaches seen by a physician will fall into the “tension headache” category, a designation that is vague by any criteria. The concept of various forms of systemic dysfunction (and particularly visceral dysfunction) as the source of most headaches with nerve reflexes transferring the distress to the upper spine is consistent with the pattern of “tension” headache. Relaxation of the upper spine by manual therapy could also be effective as a palliative treatment in such cases without total resolution of the problem because the underlying cause is not recognized.

a. Toxic Bowel and Autointoxication

Consistent with numerous historical sources on headache, the Cayce readings cite constipation and resultant autointoxication as a common source of headache. Here are two examples of “toxic bowel” etiology from the readings:

There are those conditions still that produce auto-intoxication, from the conditions as have and do exist in the physical forces, especially as respecting the eliminations from the colon and the resultant effects as come from same. This condition, we find, produces the headaches, the nausea at times, the heaviness in feet, and the condition as has been given as respecting the eyes. (1713-17)

IN THE NERVE SYSTEM, this, as we find, at PRESENT, suffers most through the internal nerve system, or through the vegetative nerves, or those of the intestines and the stomach, and the organs of digestion ... and these, as we find, indicate that the greater distress then to the blood supply, to the stresses on the nervous system, come from auto-intoxication,

Headache Research Report

produced by the condition existent in the colon itself. The colon, then, in a portion of same - especially that in the descending - is a form of prolapsus.... Drainage, then, in system becomes bad - sour stomach a result - headaches again the result - the eyes ache or burn at times from this same condition ... (19-1)

The pathophysiology of toxic bowel etiology may involve two separate processes. Some readings speak of pressures put directly upon the nervous system from the colon. In such cases the pressures almost seem to be mechanical in nature, from impaction of fecal material, producing direct pressure on the enteric nervous system that lines the intestines. This could then produce nerve reflexes via the spinal centers to the head. Reading 4677-2 suggests this pattern “Naturally, constipation causes headaches, from the contraction through the pneumogastric and hypogastric plexuses.”

Another possibility focuses on the systemic effects of autointoxication. In this scenario, due to constipation, toxic materials are absorbed through the intestinal wall into the general circulation and eventually lead to nerve reflexes resulting in headache. Colonic irrigation, diet and manual therapy to improve eliminations were common treatment for toxic bowel and autointoxication.

b. Torpid (Sluggish) Liver

Torpid or sluggish liver was mentioned in a number of readings on headache, usually in conjunction with systemic toxicity and disturbed circulation. For example, constipation was often traced to torpid liver. The physiology of the liver and the entire hepatic system are extremely complex and beyond the scope of this discussion. The *CCSI Workbook* (www.meridianinstitute.com/ccsi.htm) provides extensive documentation on this topic. The following excerpt details some of the relevant points with regard to headache:

... for when the disturbances so affect nerve centers as to cause tautness in the upper plexuses - especially those from the diaphragm region upward - we find they contribute to the disorder, affecting the bronchi, the throat, the nasal cavities, even the soft tissue in face, in these portions where the circulation - being over abundant or slow in its activity - leaves more of drosses in system. Hence in this manner contributing to the disorders. These may be seen more specific in the 4th and 5th dorsal plexus and in the 5th and 3rd cervical plexus. IN THE FUNCTIONING OF ORGANS THEMSELVES, brain forces are very good, save when there is - as it were - a disturbance to the circulation, as to make circulation through brain forces not as normal as normally. This leaves a dullness, an incapacitated force - as of sleeplessness; at other periods - as if the body drugged, and the tendency towards dormancy.... when toxic forces and torpidity of liver from same force the circulation - we have the resultant effect of congestion in head, with headaches - especially from the top of ear upward, through the eye, in the nasal cavity - the jaws even themselves at times aching across the antrum region. These are as a RESULT of the disturbance in the CIRCULATION, and a COUNTER-irritation in nerve plexus. (4452-1)

Note the systemic effects related to torpid liver:

- “tautness” in the upper nerve plexuses of the dorsal and cervical areas;

Headache Research Report

- disturbed vasomotor function to the head and face;
- local toxicity to the head and face due to “drosses” that are allowed to accumulate resulting in congestion;
- irritation to the sensory system organs.

Here is another selection on torpid liver describing systemic effects:

... there having existed for some time a torpidity in the liver and its excretory functioning....brought about those conditions where heaviness is produced in head; headaches, dull feeling in the stomach, the extremities as if they are pulsating heavily; and there is a tendency for drowsiness at times when the activities should be more active, or toxic forces arising from same. These are shown in the effects of the circulation, as given, by torpidity in the excretory functioning of liver. (379-1)

Dull headaches, chronic sinus infections or nasal catarrh and digestive system disturbances were often associated with sluggish liver. Disturbances in the “upper hepatic circulation” to and through the upper respiratory tract could be a significant factor in many vascular (vasomotor) headaches. The Cayce readings spoke of this as an incoordination between the deep (hepatic) circulation and the superficial circulation.

A variety of herbal tonics and medicines were prescribed by Cayce for torpid liver. Manual therapy (osteopathic treatment of the nerve centers for the liver and direct manipulation of the liver itself) and hot abdominal castor oil packs were also frequently recommended for problem.

c. Menstrual and Pelvic Headache

Headache associated with the menstrual cycle was discussed in many readings. Interestingly, the obvious hormonal connection for this pattern was not particularly emphasized by Cayce. Here is an excerpt that describes the role of menstrual dysfunction in headache:

*(Q) Does the patient's so called migraine headaches come from this faulty glandular condition?
(A) They come rather from the EFFECT of the glandular trouble upon the eliminating system. We have in a normal body the assimilating and eliminating system as provided for through the organs of eliminations; as through the alimentary canal, the breath, the kidney activities and the functionings of the organs of same and in the female through the action of the menstrual periods, that make for these variations in the activities of the system. When these become disturbed they produce, then, a pressure upon the nerve forces such as to produce headaches - which are as an indication of disturbance in the system, see? (739-1)*

This woman was apparently suffering from menstrual migraine. Note that the pathophysiology is framed within the context of poor eliminations with the menstrual process representing one of various channels of elimination. A reading for another woman suffering from menstrual-related headache is even more explicit in explaining the concept of incoordination of eliminations as it pertains to headache:

Headache Research Report

(Q) Why are the headaches at the time of my monthly period?

(A) These are part of the clogging that is a part of the general eliminating system. As indicated, - see, - there are channels or outlets for the eliminating of poisons; that is, used energies, where there is the effect of the activity of the circulation upon foreign forces taken in breath, taken in the dust, taken in particles of food or those activities that come from such as these, - from odors or the like. These all, by the segregating of same in the system, produce forces necessary to be eliminated. We eliminate principally through the activity of the lungs, of course, and the perspiratory system, the alimentary canal, and the kidneys. Then, as in the case of women - as here - we find that such periods of the menstrual flow cause congestion in certain areas until the flow is begun, or until there is the beginning of the let-up of same. This, then, of course, clogs some portions of the system. The headaches are the signs or warnings that eliminations are not being properly cared for. Most of this, in this body, comes from the alimentary canal, and from those conditions that exist in portions of the colon itself - as to produce a pressure upon those centers affected from such periods. Hence the suggestion for the osteopathic corrections, which aid but which do not eliminate all of those conditions which are as accumulations through portions of the colon. Consequently, the colonic irrigations are necessary occasionally, as well as the general hydrotherapy and massage. (2602-2)

Note the four primary channels of elimination: defecation, urination, respiration and perspiration with menstruation as a fifth channel for women during the monthly period. In both of these cases, the primary treatment emphasis was only improving eliminations through all the channels, especially the colon.

There are a number of readings where the underlying cause of headache is more related to the reproductive organs rather than simply menstruation. This group of headaches could be more generally described as “pelvic” in etiology. Injury, glandular dysfunction, infection, aberrant nerve impulses, and other specific factors were cited in such readings for men and women. Naturally, a variety of treatment options were provided to address the unique situation of each individual. For example, vaginal douches (Atomidine and Glyco-Thymoline) and hormones (Tonicine) were sometimes prescribed in such cases for women. The pathophysiology was complex with nerve impulses from the reproductive tract to the spinal column, sometimes indirectly via the alimentary canal.

d. Gastric Dysfunction

Various forms of gastric dysfunction were linked to headaches in the Cayce readings. Acid/alkaline imbalance was one of the most common patterns. Here is an example of gastric hyperacidity, a common problem in our culture:

These, as we find, would be only in keeping the necessary alkalinity and making for a proper reaction in the gastric flows in the system; which may be had from the diet in some specific manner.... it would be well to take Alcaroid occasionally to make for the more perfect digestion. Do not take this regularly, but only when there is the feeling or the appearance of too much fullness after meals, or a heaviness through the torso with dull, burning headaches - which at times occur, or a heaviness in the base of the brain and a stiffening in the shoulder. (462-6)

Headache Research Report

A surprisingly common pattern of gastric dysfunction noted by Cayce involves abnormal size or position of the stomach. Specifically, quite a number of readings discussed “dropped” or “tilted” stomach position as causing or contributing to headache. Here is an example from a reading in which a background report states that medical doctors diagnosed her case as migraine involving persistent headache of eight months duration:

These as we find, in their expression or manifestation, are in the nervous system disturbances which cause severe attacks of headaches.... Owing to the position then of the stomach, there are those pressures arising - through the pneumogastric and hypogastric nerve plexus, through the secondary cardiac plexus area, combined with the vagus nervous system - that produce the greater disturbances through temples, sometimes eyes, at other times the top of the head. These are SEVERE reactions to the nerve centers that are reflexed in the activity of the digestive and assimilating system. (1567-1)

Note specific nerve reflexes from stomach to head – hypogastric, pneumogastric and secondary cardiac. The treatment plan in this case called for osteopathic treatment to correct the abnormal stomach position with a stomach support belt to assist in repositioning the organ.

3. Psychological Factors

Psychological factors played an important role in the etiology and pathophysiology of headaches in the Cayce reading – both directly and indirectly. The direct effect was that Edgar Cayce suffered from headaches. Most often the headaches were linked to digestive system irritation and pelvic problems related to a childhood injury. At other times the headaches were attributed to stress and worry. At the conclusion of some of the early readings, Cayce would awaken with headache. When asked in trance how to deal with this problem, the person directing the reading was told to give a hypnotic suggestion at the end of the reading stating that Cayce would awaken feeling well without headache. The hypnotic suggestion worked and became a standard part of the trance process.

In the hundreds of readings given for others, Cayce also commonly observed that stress and worry were key factors in the production of headaches. Here are some examples of this etiological pattern:

(Q) Give cause and treatments for headaches.

(A) MOST is from worry! When those pressures are relieved, though, in the upper dorsal, this will relieve much of the stress in head. (264-11)

The general condition over the body as we have here from this condition brings about the conditions we have here to the nerve - excitable to forces in itself. That is, she is afraid of the actions of herself here. Afraid "this will make me sick because it made me sick before", and this makes a nervous headache, and tired, languid.

(Q) What was the beginning of the trouble?

(A) The first along the spine, from the pelvis, from the 4th, 1st lumbar. (3811-1)

Headache Research Report

Various other attitudinal and emotional issues were discussed by Cayce in cases involving headache. Resentment, anger and selfishness stand out as particularly relevant.

B. Headache Categories

Edgar Cayce generally did not use the “disease-centered approach” but preferred the “person-centered” approach. However, he did sometimes speak of certain illnesses or syndromes as having a certain identity.

1. Nervous/Neurasthenic Headache

Several readings use the expression “nervous headache.” Here is an example:

... the body can easily sit down and worry self into nervous headaches from conditions that are purely imaginary, until the body has thought well on same and the condition then exists. This, then, is a form of neurosis, or neurasthenic or neurotic condition - all means practically the same thing, except in this case there is the specific condition or irritation within the system that is producing same - which is the lack of coordination in the eliminating system, see? (583-7)

Note that in this reading headaches are called “nervous,” “neurotic” or “neurasthenic.” Also note that although the psychological factor is significant, the same pathophysiological processes cited in the previous sections are still present (i.e., nerve reflexes and poor eliminations). Depending upon the pathophysiology of the headache, if the stomach is involved, nervous indigestion may be present. Neurasthenia (nerve exhaustion) refers to an extremely rundown or debilitated condition in some ways similar to a modern diagnosis of chronic fatigue syndrome. Probably, by current criteria, persons presenting to a physician in this state complaining of headache would fit the description of chronic tension headache.

2. Migraine

Numerous readings discuss migraine and its numerous manifestations. Most often, migraine is traced to the digestive system or alimentary canal with many of the same etiological and pathophysiological patterns as discussed above. The important distinction that Cayce makes is that migraine is a neurovascular condition involving the trigeminal or fifth cranial nerve. So whereas the various etiological patterns discussed previously may lead to nerve reflexes and head pain, in migraine the nerve reflexes necessarily do affect the fifth nerve.

There are several important readings discussing migraine that should be considered to gain a basic understanding of Cayce’s views on this syndrome. Reading 33260-1 is one of the most important as it seems to be describing the idiopathic pattern of migraine:

As we find, while the body is in the developing stages, the sources of the conditions to which the body becomes allergic in the digestive system should be looked for - that deal with all migraine headaches.

Headache Research Report

So, this information might be used universally as to the sources of such, if it would be accepted. For, here we find such in its beginnings, and it is in the digestive system, causing - through a state of circulation - an inflammation in the connections of the intestinal tract through which blood and nerve supply bring nutriment and activity to these portions of the body...

This extends and becomes much more active in the jejunum (this is speaking universally now, not in this individual case) but its beginnings are in the area (as in this particular body) of the caecum - where the jejunum empties into the colon for further digestion and absorption by body forces.

(Q) Are the attacks due to some emotional reaction?

(A) We have given as to what are the sources. If there will be done these things outlined, you can correct the condition. If you keep taking shots or pills, you will have it the rest of your life. (3326-1)

Migraine often begins in childhood with associated abdominal features sometimes referred to as “abdominal migraine” (see Appendices C and D). This reading was given for a child who may have been suffering from this pattern. Note the reference to allergic reactions in the digestive system.

A series of readings given for a woman suffering from migraine further elaborates the pathophysiological connection between the digestive system and the specific symptoms of migraine, including the distinctive head pain, numbness and tingling of extremities, and nausea:

(Q) Please explain the periods first of pain back of the eyes, then the numbness and tingling sensation at end of fingers, then the headache across top and side of head.

(A) In the cerebrospinal system, as we have indicated, there are definite centers that have been and are affected at particular period of cycle activity, or of conditions that are produced for the functioning of the organs as related to the sensory system and the IMPULSES of the body. Under this stress and strain there has been gradually built by these impulses that which makes for an overflow to those centers that sympathetically affect the vasomotor rotations with the sensory system's activity in the brachial and in the activity of the hypogastric and pneumogastric plexus. These affect directly the organs in head; hence make for the pressures in these portions of the system where the cross activity is indicated, and affect the circulation through the upper extremities, to the head - which affect the eyes and the various portions of the head, coming THEN through branches from the vasomotor to the ... 5th nerve center, which is in the temple in its expression and to the top of the head, you see. It is through these, then, that the sensations act upon the body. We would remove these as we have outlined, through the corrective forces in the osteopathic adjustments in the centers indicated, and particularly in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th dorsal reflexes, in the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th cervicals. This, as we find, will allow gradually an uninterrupted flow of impulse through all periods of activities in the body. And the activities that make for a dilation of the ganglia and various centers through which impulses are carried for nerves - which accompany the circulatory system - WILL allow, and do make for, a CLEANSING of the system from the natural accumulations that find themselves active in a system where disturbances through pressures or subluxations have caused these conditions to gradually - as it were - make an embankment or a filling up, that eventually makes for lesions or for other destructive forces in the body. See?

(Q) Why is the headache at times followed by the nauseous condition?

Headache Research Report

(A) As indicated, when the nerve trunks are affected these have their reflexes to the conditions in the specific centers from which the hypogastric and pneumogastric affect through the cardiac plexus center in the 3rd and 4th dorsal. That's why the corrections should be here, and they should be made from the right side rather than straight up and down; there's the lateral, then, made from the right side toward the left; for when these are affected they work in sympathy. Hence pull toward the lower portion of the stomach, or from the cardiac to the pyloric end, thus producing - as it were - a sensation of the gastric juices being drawn towards the upper portion. Hence too much hydrochlorics into the lactic portions, and the nausea.

(Q) As soon as I am conscious that it is coming on, how can the headache be prevented?

(A) By a direct application or treatment to those centers through which this activity is pushing to the impulses of the whole system; that is, to the 3rd and 4th dorsal and 4th and 5th cervical.

[8/16/47 See 2345-1 Reports, saying that [480] was completely cured of migraine headaches via EC rdgs.] (480-8)

Note the vasomotor and trigeminal (fifth cranial nerve associations) linked to nerve impulses from the digestive system through the hypogastric and pneumogastric autonomic nerves that connect to the upper thoracic and cervical areas of the spine. The references to the effects on the sensory system from the nerves along the upper spine suggests that this woman may have been experiencing visual phenomena (aura) associated with classic migraine. Note the specific osteopathic adjustments to influence the stomach and maintain proper acid/alkaline balance.

Another fascinating reading also describes the connections between the fifth cranial nerve, autonomic nervous system, vasomotor centers and superficial circulation resulting in nausea:

... irritations to the centers along the cerebrospinal system, where the sympathetic and the cerebrospinal make for coordinations through the nerve centers or ganglia. This has disturbed, in a specific manner, the circulation between the sympathetic system or the superficial circulation and the deeper, or through the fifth nerve center, through the nerve centers and blood supply that make for the vasomotor activity in the body....

(Q) Why is the nausea present generally in the mornings?

(A) From the upsetting of the hypogastric center through the sympathetic cardiac center, which controls the roll - as it were - of the stomach itself, which has not settled. Hence the centers from which the applications of the electrical forces are made. See, the 1st and 2nd dorsal are those areas from which the sympathetic or secondary cardiac plexus to the stomach receive their impulses; while those for making the SETTLING of same are from the 9th dorsal plexus - and these are vibrating with the vaso-motor centers from the centers in the hypogastric and pneumogastric area at the axis - or atlas. (697-1)

The following selections focus on specific etiological and pathophysiological patterns that can produce complex nerve reflexes resulting in migraine.

a. Toxic Colon

Toxic colon was probably the most frequently cited factor in the Cayce migraine readings.

Headache Research Report

Following the logic of 3326-1, in which allergic reactions in the digestive system were cited as a common factor in migraine, one might expect that the lower bowel would also be affected.

As in most conditions of the nature of migraine or so-called headaches, the cause is in the colon - where there are patches of adhesions of fecal forces to the walls of the intestine, causing activities that come in general cycles. These may come at times regularly, almost so that you could set this by your clock at times; for it is as the regularity of the system itself. (3630-1)

We find that these began some time back when there was poor eliminations manifested in the body. While some conditions have been bettered at times these have left in portions of the colon the disturbing conditions that constantly – when there is an activity of the body on the feet or moving about to any extent – cause what has been termed migraine headache or pressures upon the 5th nerve; so as to cause, as it were, all characters of nerve tension through head and face, teeth - or in gums, sinus, soft tissue of face and head. (4023-1)

Here we find some complications - the effects of or the beginning of migraine headaches. Most of these, as in this case, begin from congestions in the colon. These cause toxic conditions to make pressures on the sympathetic nerve centers and on the cerebrospinal system. And these pressures cause the violent headaches, and almost irrational activities at times. These, as we find, should respond to colonic irrigations. But first, we would x-ray the colon, and we will find areas in the ascending colon and a portion of the transverse colon where there are fecal forces that are as cakes.

(Q) Is any of this trouble due to allergy?

(A) Some of it is due to allergy, but what is allergy? These are the effects of the imagination upon any influences that may react upon the olfactory or the sympathetic nerves. If we will cleanse the system, as we find, we should bring better conditions....

(Q) What mental factor is responsible for the disturbance in the subject's head?

(A) Those pressures, as indicated, between sympathetic and cerebrospinal system, and these arise from the condition in the colon. X-ray it [the colon] and you'll find it. (3400-2)

As we find, these conditions have gradually grown much worse as the impactions in the colon area have added to the congestions in the liver and gall duct. These increase the headaches, the sick headaches and nausea, hard headaches. These, as we find, are not migraine but they may become such unless measures are taken.... For the engorgement in the colon is upon the ascending and a portion of the transverse colon. (5020-1)

These four excerpts exemplify the toxic colon etiology of migraine. Note the reference to the fifth nerve in reading 4023-1. Also, keep in mind the previous excerpt from reading 739-1 in which a woman was experiencing menstrual migraine that Cayce linked to poor eliminations through the colon. Finally, note that reading 3400-2 encouraged the man to have the colon x-rayed to confirm the fecal cakes that were irritating the nervous systems.

Headache Research Report

b. Liver/Gall Bladder

Problems with the liver and/or gall bladder were cited in some migraine readings as documented below. Note the consequent condition of poor eliminations that is often associated with this pattern.

(Q) What special treatment for migraine headaches?

(A) This is the reflex here from the condition in the gall duct area, and as those applications are made CORRECTING the eliminations and the lesions, we will find that the headaches will gradually disappear. (1857-1)

... [conditions] caused a general nervous breakdown.... conditions have affected the area about the liver and gall duct, and gall bladder, in such manners as to hinder their proper reaction.

These find reflex reaction through the nerve pressures from the areas in the cerebrospinal system as indicated, as combined with the nerve flexure to head, nasal passage, and those areas in the whole of the vegetative nerve force, - as to produce a continued reaction from digestive forces, or headache - that is called the migraine nature. (2078-1)

(Q) Does the gall bladder ailment cause the occasional migraine headaches (though much lighter in pain than formerly)?

(A) It's the larger contributing factor, and with the better eliminations these should be farther and farther apart. (2078-3)

c. Gastric Dysfunction

Gastric (stomach) dysfunction was mentioned in some migraine readings. A previous section included an excerpt that identified abnormal stomach position as the source of the headaches (1567-1). Reading 3043-1 also cited stomach dysfunction as the cause of migraine, linking the problem to the after-effects of cold virus, combined with intestinal disorder.

From the effects of a deep cold, combined with some intestinal disorder, there has been produced inflammation that has upset the coordination between the lymph circulation and the central circulation, also the nerve impulses. So, we find a great deal of trouble through the intestinal tract; forming gas in the lower portion of the duodenum after almost each meal, a great deal of discomfort, and the reflexing of these to the circulation between the heart, liver and lungs. At other periods through the lower portion of the abdomen, and through the liver area, there are tendencies for contractions.

(Q) What causes the migraine headaches?

(A) This is from the stomach. (3043-1)

d. Glandular Dysfunction

Problems with the glandular system was mentioned in a couple of migraine readings:

Headache Research Report

(Q) Please give the cause and cure of migraine?

(A) The glandular system as has been indicated, that makes for the pressures upon the nerve system and the activities of same to the body. And as these are relieved through the creating of those effects upon the whole of the nervous system, we will remove the causes as well as the effects. (1295-1)

We find, too, that the distress upon the nervous system and the pressures as indicated in the lumbar and sacral area have - through the periods of changes in the activities of the body, through glandular secretion and glandular activity - changed or rather increased the pressures upon the digestive forces.

Thus there has been caused what has been termed migraine, or the effect of the fifth nerve center and the vagus center as to the headaches - on top of the head at times, at others at the base of the brain and then through the temple and eyes. (1651-1)

Note that the glandular dysfunction produced pressures on the nervous system. In the case of 1651-1, the digestive system was also affected. Note the reference to the fifth nerve in reading 1651-1.

e. Psychological Factors

Naturally, psychological factors play an important role in migraine. The following case implicates dysfunctional attitudes as a contributing factor in migraine:

There is a great deal of disturbance in the physical forces of the body, that causes quite an aggravation to the body. Yet as we find, if there would be a change in attitude of the body toward life and its relationships to things around it, we might find a great deal of difference.

To be sure, these are pathological conditions; and, of course, there can oft be made a great deal of excuse for anyone suffering with intense headaches; especially those as here - that involve the 5th nerve; or as they become what are called migraine headaches.

We find that these areas primarily form disturbances in the cerebrospinal system, that - through a long period of time - have builded up those conditions which, with any aggravation to the imaginative or sympathetic nervous system, discharge, as it were, superabundance of energies that cause the pressures on the side and through portions of the temple and the head nerves themselves. (3169-1)

C. Treatment of Headache

There was a great deal of variability in the treatment recommendations made by Edgar Cayce for headache. In large part, this was due to the emphasis on prescribing the optimal treatment for each individual at a specific point in time. Some variability was also due to the changing availability of the certain therapies over time. Table 1 provides a glimpse into the relative frequency of the most commonly recommended therapies for headache.

Headache Research Report

1. Manual Therapy

Osteopathic treatment of a gentle, relaxing nature (rather than stimulating) was by far the most frequently recommended form of manual therapy for headache. Osteopathic physicians of Cayce's era could make specific adjustments when needed and provide general relaxing treatments as a systemic tonic to improve nervous system coordination and drainages. Massage was also frequently recommended for the same reasons. Exercise, although not strictly a form of manual therapy, often produces many of the same effects with regard to relaxation, coordination and drainages.

2. Medication

Digestive aids and laxatives such as lactated pepsin, Alcaroid, milk of bismuth, milk of magnesia and Eno salts were some of the most frequently recommended medications recommended by Edgar Cayce for headache. Complex herbal tonics intended to improve assimilations and eliminations (containing botanicals such as yellow dock root, sarsaparilla, calisaya, burdock, wild cherry bark, sassafras, and elder flower) were recommended in many of the early Cayce readings for headache. Atomidine was recommended as a glandular stimulant and purifier. Tonicine was suggested for women with reproductive system problems. A sedative formula containing potassium iodide and potassium bromide was sometimes prescribed for symptomatic relief of pain and nervousness.

3. Diet

Dietary recommendations generally focused on certain key principles such as maintaining a balanced pH by eating mostly fresh fruits and vegetables which would also tend to maintain good eliminations. For individuals that were sensitive or allergic to certain foods, the recommendation to avoid those foods was given.

TABLE 1: Frequency of Therapies for Headache Based on DOS CDROM Search of Indexes Using "Headache" as Descriptor.

323	osteopathy
136	massage
109	colonic irrigation
87	exercise
68	radio-active (radial) appliance
63	violet ray appliance
53	surgery
47	enema
42	fume bath
42	castor oil pack
40	lactated pepsin
37	tolu
31	Atomidine
28	wet cell battery
28	milk of bismuth
27	calisaya
26	sarsaparilla
25	Alcaroid
25	meditation
23	Eno Salts
22	yellow dock root
21	Epsom Salts
20	potassium bromide
20	sassafras
20	wild cherry bark
18	mutton tallow, camphor & turpentine
18	ultraviolet lamp
18	Calcios
18	douches
17	potassium iodide
16	hot salt pack
15	capsicum or capsici
14	valerian
14	burdock
14	stillingia
14	elder flower
12	ginseng
12	buchu
12	Fletcher's Castoria
12	yellow saffron
12	sinusoidal
11	mandrake or podophyllum
11	milk of magnesia
11	affirmation
11	nujol
11	Acigest
10	short wave therapy
10	Tonicine
10	prickly ash bark

Headache Research Report

4. Hydrotherapy

Colonic irrigation was by far the most common form of hydrotherapy recommended for headache with high enemas also relatively common. The most common type of fume bath ingredient was witchhazel.

5. Electrotherapy

The radial appliance was the most frequently recommended form of electrotherapy for headache. This device was said to balance circulation and improve nervous system coordination. The violet ray appliance was recommended almost as often to stimulate the nervous system and superficial circulation. For individuals requiring significant systemic rejuvenation and regeneration, the wet cell battery was usually prescribed.

6. Mental/Spiritual Healing

Prayer and meditation were suggested in some readings on headache. Many individuals were told that they needed a change of attitude, doing letting go of worry, resentment, anger or selfishness.