

[IMAGE]

## A Painful Lesson

When it comes to handling pain, are you a pill-popper? Whenever you feel a headache coming on, or experience neck or back pain, do you immediately reach for the medicine cabinet and down a few painkillers? If you're one of the millions who do just that, take note: According to a recent study, you might actually be making the pain worse over the long run.

Researchers found that daily or near-daily use of over-the-counter (OTC) or prescription painkillers was associated with chronic headaches (especially chronic migraines), and to a lesser extent, with other common, chronic pain conditions, including neck and back pain. For example, daily use for only one month increased the likelihood of suffering chronic migraines nearly threefold, and chronic neck pain and chronic back pain nearly twofold.

If that isn't frightening enough, researchers discovered that subjects who took painkillers daily for more than six months (a more common occurrence than you might think) were more than 20 times more likely to suffer chronic migraines, 3.5 times more likely to suffer chronic neck pain, and 3.5 times more likely to suffer chronic back pain.

If these figures give you a headache, don't reach for the medicine cabinet, of course, or you'll probably just end up in more pain. To learn about nonpharmaceutical alternatives to treat head, neck and back pain, schedule an appointment with a doctor of chiropractic, who is trained to manage these types of conditions - and prevent them from recurring.

### *Reference:*

Zwart J-A, Dyb G, Hagen K, et al. Analgesic overuse among subjects with headache, neck and low-back pain. *Neurology* 2004;62:1540-44.

For more information on the potential dangers of OTC and prescription medications, visit [www.chiroweb.com/find/archives/general/drugs](http://www.chiroweb.com/find/archives/general/drugs).

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