



LEAH OLSON, L Ac

ACUPUNCTURE
HERBAL MEDICINE

920 574 0447

leah@wholefamilyacupuncture.com

wholefamilyacupuncture.com

612 E LONGVIEW DR, STE B APPLETON, WI 54911

Understanding and Managing Headaches: A Self-Care Guide

Most headaches involve tension in the muscles of the neck, jaw, and upper back. While this tension can have many triggers - from stress to poor posture to diet - learning to release these key muscle groups can provide significant relief.

The Connection Between Trigger Points and Acupuncture

Trigger points are small, sensitive areas in your muscles that can cause pain both at the point itself and in other areas of your body (referred pain). These points often correspond with traditional acupuncture points, which isn't surprising given our growing understanding of how the body's myofascial (muscle and connective tissue) system overlaps with traditional acupuncture meridians. When you apply pressure to these points, you stimulate the same nerve fibers that respond to acupuncture needles, making self-massage a powerful tool for home care.

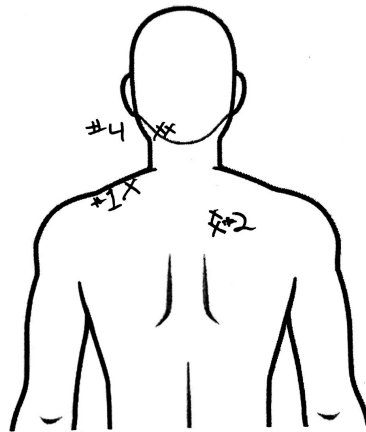
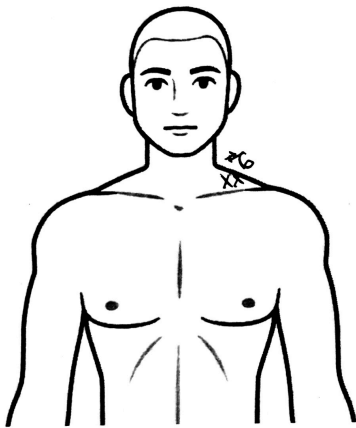
Getting Started with Self-Massage

The key to effective self-massage is gentle, sustained pressure rather than aggressive rubbing. You'll need a massage ball - while a tennis ball works to start, I recommend the Yoga Tune Up therapy balls for their durability and perfect density. When working on a point:

- Start with light pressure and gradually increase as the tissue releases
- If you find yourself holding your breath, that's a sign you're using too much pressure
- Spend no more than a couple of minutes on each area.
- Repeat every 2-3 days
- If you experience any nerve sensations (tingling, numbness, or sharp pain), adjust the position of the ball

Key Areas to Address

- Different headache patterns often connect to specific muscle groups, but for most headaches, your best bet is to start with these three: the trapezius, the levator scapulae and the sternocleidomastoid (SCM). For headaches that start at the base of your skull and travel forward through your head towards your eyes, add some acupressure on the suboccipitals. For frontal headaches, include massage on the masseter and the scalenes.



- #1 Trapezius
- #2 Levator Scapula
- #3 SCM
- #4 Suboccipitals
- #5 Masseter
- #6 Scalenes

Helpful video links:

[Trapezius and Levator Scapulae](#)

[Suboccipitals and SCM](#)

[Masseter](#)

[Scalenes](#)