

Occipital neuralgia

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Occipital neuralgia, also known as C2 neuralgia, Arnold's neuralgia, is a medical condition characterized by chronic pain in the upper neck, back of the head and behind the eyes. These areas correspond to the locations of the lesser and greater occipital nerves.

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Classification and external resources

ICD-10	G52.8, ^[1] R51 ^[2] , G44.847
ICD-9	723.8

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Causes

Occipital neuralgia is caused by damage to these nerves. Ways in which they can be damaged include trauma (usually concussive), physical stress on the nerve, repetitious neck contraction, flexion or extension, and as a result of medical complications (such as *osteochondroma*, a benign tumour of the bone).

One cause is vascular compression.^[3]

Symptoms

The symptom of this condition is chronic headache. The pain is commonly localized in the back of head and around or over the top of the head, sometimes up to the eyebrow or behind the eye. Because chronic headaches are a common symptom for numerous conditions, occipital neuralgia is often misdiagnosed at first, most commonly as tension headache or a migraine leading to treatment failure or addiction. Another symptom is the eyes being sensitive to light, especially when headaches occur.

Occipital neuralgia can cause very intense pain that feels like a sharp, jabbing, electric shock in the back of the head and neck. Other symptoms of occipital neuralgia may include:

- Aching, burning, and throbbing pain that typically starts at the base of the head and radiates to the scalp
- Pain on one or both sides of the head
- Pain behind the eye
- Sensitivity to light
- Tender scalp

- Pain when moving the neck

Treatment

Once diagnosed, occipital neuralgia can be treated in several ways. These include local nerve block, peripheral nerve stimulation, steroids, rhizotomy, phenol injections, antidepressants, and Occipital Cryoneurolysis.

Other less common forms of surgical neurolysis or microdecompression are also used to treat the condition when conservative measures fail.

References

- ↑ "IHS - International Headache Society □ IHS vs. ICD-10". http://ihs-classification.org/en/02_klassifikation/00.00.00_icd10table.html. Retrieved 2007-10-12.
- ↑ "NCCH ID". <http://pc-ncc23.fhs.usyd.edu.au/queries/criteria1.asp>. Retrieved 2007-10-12.
- ↑ White, J. B.; Atkinson, P. P.; Cloft, H. J.; Atkinson, J. L. (2008). "Vascular compression as a potential cause of occipital neuralgia: a case report". *Cephalalgia : an international journal of headache* **28** (1): 78–82. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2982.2007.01427.x. PMID 18021267.

External links

- occipitalneuralgia* at NINDS

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Categories: Neuroscience stubs | Neurological disorders

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