
The Facts:

“Occipital neuralgia happens when there’s pressure or irritation to your occipital nerves, maybe because of an injury, tight muscles that entrap the nerves, or inflammation.” (WebMD, 2016)

Because this is not your average headache, it is essential that those suffering from occipital neuralgia address it to relieve the stress on the nerves in their neck. If gone untreated, it could possibly lead to surgical procedures having to be done.

Sources:

Healthline. (2017). *Occipital Neuralgia*. Retrieved from <https://www.healthline.com/health/occipital-neuralgia>

WebMD. (2016). *Occipital Neuralgia*. Retrieved from <https://www.webmd.com/migraines-headaches/occipital-neuralgia-symptoms-causes-treatments#1>

American Migraine Foundation. (2016). *Occipital Neuralgia*. Retrieved from <https://americanmigrainefoundation.org/understanding-migraine/occipital-neuralgia/>

American Migraine Foundation. (2017). *Daith Piercings 101*. Retrieved from <https://americanmigrainefoundation.org/understanding-migraine/daith-piercings-101/>

Is It More Than Just A Migraine?

All about occipital neuralgia and possible treatments.



The Facts:

“Occipital neuralgia is a condition in which the nerves that run from the top of the spinal cord up through the scalp, called the occipital nerves, are inflamed or injured.” (WebMD, 2016) Occipital Neuralgia can cause migraine like symptoms because of the stress on the occipital nerve. These ‘migraines’ can cause people to be physically ill and/or sensitive to light and sounds.

It is essential that if you are having these symptoms, you consult your doctor right away. Your doctor can then suggest a treatment that best fits you and your needs.

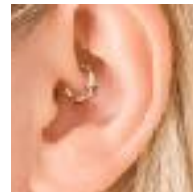
“It’s estimated that occipital neuralgia affects about three out of every 100,000 people every year.” (Healthline, 2017)

Possible Options for Treatment:

A variety of different treatment options are available for occipital neuralgia. Your doctor may first recommend trying home treatment, which includes applying warm compresses to the affected area and taking NSAIDs like ibuprofen (Advil).

Your doctor may also recommend physical therapy, prescription muscle relaxers, and massage, which can help treat pinched nerves caused by tight muscles. Antiepileptic and tricyclic antidepressants can both be used to reduce symptoms as well.

If the more conservative methods don’t work, your doctor can inject a local anesthetic to your occipital area. This can provide immediate relief, and it can last up to 12 weeks. (Healthline, 2017)



An Additional Option:

Another option that others have explored is piercing a part of their ear called the daith.

"A daith piercing is a piercing through the smallest fold of cartilage in your ear, right at the point where the outer ridge that runs along the top of your ear connects to your inner ear, just above the ear canal. Because it’s a small, curvy piece of cartilage, it can sometimes be hard to pierce, and once it’s done most people don’t change the jewelry often. It can take months to heal and can easily become infected if not pierced or cared for correctly. Still, some people with migraine have reported that their daith piercing resulted in reduced pain during migraine attacks, leading others to seek out the piercings exclusively for their potential to reduce migraine pain. It’s important to note, however, that any reported results are widely believed to be placebo.” (American Migraine Foundation, 2017)