

# Contents

## SECTION I DIAGNOSTIC QUESTIONS

### 1 **Orgasmic Headaches** 3

Headache arising during intercourse is, of course, one of the most unsettling headache presentations. The differential diagnosis for sudden headache (e.g., subarachnoid hemorrhage, arterial dissection, cerebral venous thrombosis) is discussed as well as the gamut of exertional headaches. Treatment of orgasmic headache is also summarized.

### 2 **Sinus Headache** 7

Migraine and other primary headache types are often misdiagnosed as "sinus headache" because of location and nasal symptoms. However, there are some rhinological and sinus conditions that do lead to head and facial pain. Sphenoid sinus inflammation is particularly likely to produce headache. The causes and ways of diagnosing of headache due to rhinosinusitis and related conditions are discussed in this chapter.

### 3 **White Matter Abnormalities on Magnetic Resonance Imaging** 12

Abnormalities of the white matter are frequently seen on the magnetic resonance images of patients under evaluation for their headaches. These findings are seen in a number of conditions. The differential diagnosis, significance, and etiology of these lesions are discussed in this chapter.

### 4 **Childhood Migraine** 17

Headache diagnosis and treatment in children differ from clinical approaches in adults. One example is the category of "migraine precursors," such as abdominal migraine and cyclic vomiting. This chapter provides a clear diagnostic schema for these childhood conditions and reviews the basics of migraine treatment in children.

### 5 **Giant Cell Arteritis** 22

Giant cell arteritis is the most common primary arteritis in the elderly. This chapter reviews the clinical features, diagnostic criteria, work-up, and treatment options for this disorder, including the work-up when preliminary results are normal or equivocal.

### 6 **Carotid Dissection** 28

Carotid dissection is a not uncommon cause of headache and neurological disturbance in young patients but is unfortunately often misdiagnosed. This chapter reviews the clinical features, diagnostic work-up, and treatment options for this condition.

**7 Chiari Malformation and Migraine 32**

Chiari malformations are rare congenital lesions that may be asymptomatic and discovered incidentally or may produce a number of clinical symptoms. This chapter reviews the spectrum of headaches produced by these malformations and discusses the need for surgical intervention.

**8 New Daily Persistent Headache 36**

Patients with new daily persistent headache can generally pinpoint the date their headaches started. Characteristics of the head pain tend to be relatively nondescript, but patients are distressed by the persistence of the pain. Differential diagnosis and treatment options are described in this chapter.

**9 Spontaneous Intracranial Hypotension 41**

Spontaneous intracranial hypotension results from an occult leak of cerebrospinal fluid. The clinical features, diagnostic investigations, and treatment options are fully reviewed in this chapter.

**10 Vasculitis Headache 47**

Inflammation of cerebral arteries is virtually always painful. Both primary and secondary forms (including drug-induced cerebral arteritis) may present primarily with headache and must be excluded. This chapter outlines diagnostic and treatment considerations in cerebral vasculitis. The curious disorders “headache with associated neurological deficits and cerebrospinal fluid lymphocytosis” and “reversible cerebral vasoconstriction syndrome” share some features of cerebral vasculitis and are also discussed in this chapter.

**11 Migraine with Persistent Aura 52**

The migraine aura may be simple or complex and usually lasts 60 minutes or less. Rarely, the aura of migraine may be prolonged. This chapter reviews the clinical features of the typical migraine aura and discusses the features and treatment options for the two subtypes of prolonged aura.

**12 Migrainous Vertigo 57**

It has become clear that vertigo is a common migraine aura symptom. There are some migraine disorders with prominent vertigo, such as basilar-type migraine and benign positional vertigo of childhood. The diagnosis of migrainous vertigo in the absence of the accompanying headache is a bit challenging but crucial if these patients are to receive effective treatment. Criteria are summarized in this chapter. The differential diagnosis of vertigo is discussed as well.

**13 Cough Headache 63**

Headaches that occur during exertion or coughing may be primary or secondary. This chapter reviews the clinical features, indications for work-up, and treatment options in these disorders.

#### **14 Nummular Headache 67**

Nummular (“coin-like”) headache pain refers to a localized area of scalp pain and is thought to be due to a local neuropathic process, akin to trigeminal or cervical root branch neuralgia. Diagnosis and treatment options (including local anesthetic procedures) are discussed in this chapter.

### **SECTION II TREATMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

#### **15 Menstrual Headaches 73**

Headaches occurring around the time of menses tend to be very disabling. Most headaches associated with menses are migraines without aura. Fortunately, there are a number of good treatment strategies, both for acute pain relief as well as for prophylaxis which can be limited to several days surrounding the onset of menses (“miniprophylaxis”). This chapter discusses the identification and clinical management of menstrually related headaches.

#### **16 Analgesic Overuse 79**

Patients with medication overuse headache (MOH) must overcome their dependence on acute medications in order for improvement to occur. Most patients with MOH can be treated on an outpatient basis. This chapter reviews strategies for treating patients with MOH due to simple analgesics, combination medications, butalbital-containing compounds, and opioids.

#### **17 Headaches in Pregnancy 84**

While some women with migraine note an improvement during pregnancy (especially the last two trimesters), many continue to experience headaches, and some suffer an increase in attack frequency and/or severity. These can be intractable, in part due to the restricted choices in pharmacotherapy. The clinical approach to diagnosis and effective management of migraine and other headaches during pregnancy is discussed in this chapter.

#### **18 Hemicrania Continua 89**

Hemicrania continua is an underrecognized primary headache disorder that is uniquely responsive to treatment with indomethacin. This chapter discusses the clinical features, differential diagnosis, and work-up for this disorder and reviews the treatment options including strategies to employ when indomethacin is ineffective or contraindicated.

#### **19 Trigeminal Neuralgia 93**

The agonizing pain of trigeminal neuralgia can prove resistant to simple treatment. Differential diagnosis includes glossopharyngeal neuralgia, facial pathology, and lesions in the region of the path of the trigeminal nerve or in the

brainstem near the trigeminal nuclei. Both diagnostic and treatment approaches (medical and surgical) are discussed in this chapter.

**20 Emergency Department and Inpatient Management 98**

This chapter reviews the treatment of headache in the emergency department and the indications for inpatient admission. In addition, a variety of treatment strategies are discussed, and tapering methods for butalbital-containing medications and opioids are provided.

**21 Occipital Neuralgia 104**

Occipital neuralgia (ON) presents with lancinating (often mixed with more aching) occipital pain, which can be very disabling. There are a number of conditions which present, like ON, with posterior pain; but tenderness of the greater occipital nerve and response to greater occipital nerve anesthetic blockade are essentially pathognomonic.

**22 Headache Recurrence 109**

Recurrence of headache following initially successful treatment occurs in approximately 20% of patients who use triptans for acute relief. This chapter outlines the clinical features of recurrence and provides strategies to avoid it.

**23 Headache and Allergy 112**

Many patients feel that environmental and dietary allergens or other agents (including additives in medications) can cause them to experience headache. This chapter outlines a reasonable approach to the investigation of dietary and environmental triggers of migraine and other headaches, as well as nonpharmaceutical approaches to pain relief.

**24 Headache Treatment in Human Immunodeficiency Virus Infection (HIV) and Drug Addiction 116**

Headaches in patients with active HIV infection may stem from a number of causes, including primary headaches unrelated to HIV. Diagnostic approaches are outlined. This chapter also discusses the pitfalls encountered in headache and pain management when treating patients with substance abuse.

**25 Pseudotumor 120**

Pseudotumor cerebri, or idiopathic intracranial hypertension, often affects young obese women. Hallmarks are headaches of various types, papilledema, and increased opening pressure on lumbar puncture. When headaches or visual dysfunction fail to respond to acetazolamide, there are several other alternatives, which are explained in this chapter.

## SECTION III PROGNOSTIC, SOCIAL, AND LEGAL ISSUES

### **26 Migraine Treatment and the Serotonin Syndrome** 127

The FDA warning of the potential for life-threatening interactions between the triptans and other medications has been a cause of great concern. This chapter discusses the clinical features of the serotonin syndrome, reviews the criteria needed for diagnosis, and outlines the risk of the syndrome.

### **27 School Issues** 131

Rarely, children and adolescent headache sufferers miss school on a frequent basis. This chapter reviews the various reasons for school absence and avoidance and outlines strategies to deal with these issues.

### **28 Posttraumatic Headaches** 135

One of the more controversial areas in headache medicine is the diagnosis and prognosis of trauma-related headache. Either mild or severe head and/or neck trauma can lead to chronic headaches, which are also associated with the broader postconcussive syndrome. These conditions, along with their prognostic and legal ramifications, are discussed.

### **29 Transient Global Amnesia and Migraine** 140

Transient global amnesia (TGA) is a well-recognized neurological syndrome resulting in a short-lasting inability to create new memory. The pathophysiology of the disorder is not known, but it has been linked to migraine, transient ischemic attack, and perhaps epilepsy. This chapter reviews the work-up needed prior to prescribing triptans in migraine sufferers who have had TGA or other transient neurological events.

### **30 Migraines and Arteriovenous Malformations** 144

Unruptured arteriovenous malformations (AVMs) are occasionally discovered incidentally during the work-up of a patient with headaches. This chapter discusses the clinical features of unruptured AVMs, the link between AVMs and headache, and the risks and benefits of treatment.

### **31 Migraine and Patent Foramen Ovale** 148

The observation of the significantly increased incidence of patent foramen ovale (PFO) in migraine sufferers has raised questions about causality and the potential benefit of PFO repair in otherwise asymptomatic patients. This chapter addresses the nature of the relationship between migraine and PFO as well as the pros and cons for transcatheter PFO repair in migraine patients.

**32 Postconcussive Headache** 153

Determining when to allow an athlete to return to competition following a concussion is often a challenge. This chapter reviews the clinical features of the postconcussive syndrome and outlines the return-to-play guidelines that have been established.

**33 Use of Triptans in Elderly Patients** 158

Although usually a disorder of the young, approximately 3%–10% of older patients continue to suffer from migraine. Because this age group has more medical comorbidity, treatment options may be limited. This chapter reviews the indications, contraindications, and work-up required to safely prescribe triptans in older migraine sufferers.

**Index** 163