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Realizing the benefits, makes the benefits real

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Realizing the benefits, makes the benefits real

Picture a client attending your practice with persistent occipital headache more toward the right than the left. The patient reports a high stress level at work and clinical assessment reveals a high score on the Nijmegen Questionnaire indicating likelihood of a breathing pattern disorder (Chaitow 2004, 2012), while postural screening identifies a significant forward head posture, and a fixed, hyperkyphotic thoracic spine. A slight head-tilt to the right is also noted which correlates with the occipital headache on the right more than left. On palpation of the suboccipital group, there is some general tenderness (between 3/10 to 5/10 discomfort on a visual analogue scale), but with more significant discomfort (7-8/10) when palpating the right rectus capitus obliquus inferior.

The working diagnosis is that this patient has cervicogenic headache due to impingement of the greater occipital nerve under the right rectus capitus obliquus inferior associated to forward head posture as part of an upper-crossed postural presentation. This is likely compounded by a breathing pattern disorder, which may be a cause or an effect of the persistent pain they're experiencing.

After ruling out any systemic pathologies, such as ankylosing spondylitis, it is decided that a home program of corrective mobilization and exercise is an important part of the rehabilitation process for this patient.

Below are two corrective interventions in text box 1 and 2:

[insert Textbox 1]

Corrective Intervention 1 – Foam Roller (FR) Longitudinal

1. Take a foam roller (FR), long enough to lie longitudinally **along** it (typically 90cm in length and 8-15cm in diameter).
2. Lie with the FR length-ways down your spine, arms draped off the side.
3. Have the end of the foam roller under the base of the skull and relax there for 3-5 minutes – or as long as comfortable.
4. Take the opportunity to relax and do some deep abdominal breaths in through your nose while lying there.

[Insert Textbox 2]

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