



2026 INTERVIEW SUMMARY SHEET

SPEAKER

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TOPIC

Why Neck Pain Matters in Migraine — And What To Do About It

TITLE & ORGANIZATION

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KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Neck pain can be both a trigger for a migraine attack and a secondary symptom caused by the migraine's effect on the central nervous system.
- The brain cannot always distinguish between signals coming from the upper neck and the head often resulting in neck pain referred by migraine.
- Imaging (MRIs/X-rays) often shows "normal" age-related wear; diagnosis should focus on physical function, strength, and mobility rather than just scans.
- Successful management often requires treating the migraine (medication/lifestyle) alongside the neck (physiotherapy/exercise) rather than focusing on one in isolation.
- Cervicogenic headache is referred pain in which the headache stems from cervical structures.

KEY TREATMENTS

- Chiropractic care
- Cervical manipulation
- Ergonomics
- Lifestyle factors (diet, exercise, sleep, hydration, stress management)
- Occipital nerve blocks
- Physical therapy/physiotherapy
- Radiofrequency ablation
- TENS (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation)
- Trigger point injection

NOTABLE QUOTES

"Neck pain doesn't cause migraine... but what many people don't realize is that migraine can actually cause neck pain."

"Migraine is...characterized by sensitivities. People get sensitive to light, to sound, to different things. What a lot of people don't realize is the neck also becomes really sensitive because of migraine."

PRACTICAL STEPS

- Consult a physiotherapist with specific experience in headache and cervical spine disorders for a functional movement exam.
- Monitor if neck stiffness occurs just before a migraine; if so, treat it as a migraine symptom and use acute medication early.
- Address multiple small lifestyle factors (sleep, hydration, "brain breaks") simultaneously to lower the overall neurological load.
- Start with very low-intensity aerobic activity and gradually increase the "dose" to build resilience without triggering an attack.
- Before undergoing cervical manipulation, ensure the clinician performs a thorough risk screening for cardiovascular issues and arterial health.