

External Influences

Understanding Headaches

A gentle introduction through the lens of Chinese Medicine



“A sudden impact from wind, cold, or heat”

In Chinese medicine, headaches are not seen as a single condition, but as a reflection of different patterns within the body.

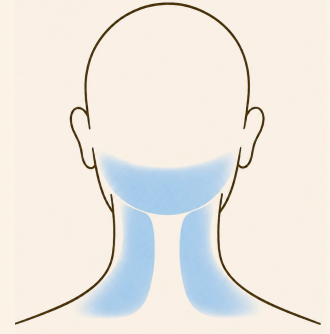
Some headaches are influenced by **external factors such as wind, cold, or heat**. These influences can affect the body when it is more exposed or sensitive, often leading to symptoms that **come on relatively quickly**.

These patterns are commonly influenced by **changes in weather, environment, or temperature**.

Wind-Cold

风寒 (*Fēng Hán*)

Wind from the outside, expressing as Cold in the body



What it may feel like

- Tight, aching headache (often at the back of the head or neck)
- Chills, sensitivity to cold and wind
- No sweating
- Stiff neck and shoulders, with muscle aches

May also come with

- Nasal congestion or thin, watery discharge
- Facial discomfort or pain

Often linked to

- Exposure to cold wind or draughts
- Being exposed to cold after washing hair or going out with wet hair
- Sudden changes in temperature

What may help

- Keep the neck and upper back well covered, especially in windy or changeable weather
- Rest and gentle warmth (e.g. scarf, warm bath)
- Avoid further exposure to cold wind or draughts

Possible Western medical overlap

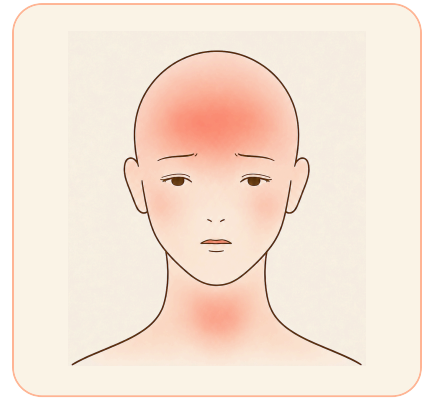
For general understanding only – not a diagnosis.

- Common cold, flu (influenza), upper respiratory infections.
- Sometimes described as migraine or facial nerve pain (trigeminal neuralgia).
- This pattern is often associated with exposure to cold wind, draughts, or sudden temperature changes.

Wind-Heat

风热 (*Fēng Rè*)

Wind from the outside, expressing as Heat in the body



What it may feel like

- Acute, throbbing or expanding headache (often forehead or whole head)
- Feeling hot or feverish, sometimes with slight chills
- Thirst, often for cool drinks
- Sore, swollen throat
- Dry cough or sticky yellow phlegm
- May feel better with a cold compress

Often linked to

- Early stages of seasonal illness
- Seasonal change

What may help

- Rest and avoid overheating
- Stay hydrated
- Light, cooling foods
- Allow the body time to release and rebalance (e.g. cold compress)

Possible Western medical overlap

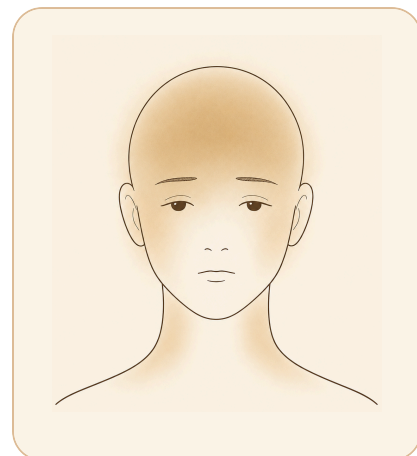
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- Common cold, influenza, tonsillitis.
- Sometimes seen in early stages of viral infections (e.g. measles or mumps).

Wind-Dampness

风湿 (Fēng Shī)

Wind from the outside, combined with Dampness, affecting the head



What it may feel like

- Heavy, foggy, or dull headache
- Sensation of heaviness, as if the head is “wrapped”
- Worse in the morning or humid/rainy weather
- Feeling physically heavy or sluggish
- Low appetite, nausea, or loose stools
- Stiffness or heaviness in the neck/back

May also come with

- Sinus or nasal congestion
- Muscle and joint aches
- chest and abdominal distention
- Chills and mild fever when acute

Often linked to

- Damp or humid weather
- Rainy climates
- Exposure to mould or damp environments

What may help

- Keep warm and avoid damp/cold environments
- Gentle movement to support circulation
- Avoid overly heavy or greasy foods

Possible Western medical overlap

For general understanding only – not a diagnosis.

- Common cold, influenza.
- Sometimes associated with digestive symptoms such as nausea or stomach flu (viral gastroenteritis).

Severe / Toxic Wind-Heat

风热毒 (*Fēng Rè Dú*)

Wind from the outside, more intense external heat affecting the system



What it may feel like

- Sudden onset of a strong, pounding headache
- High fever, often with chills
- Marked sore throat, with redness, swelling, or inflammation

Often linked to

- Strong infections
- Acute inflammatory responses

What may help

- Rest is essential
- Keep cool and hydrated
- Seek appropriate medical support when symptoms are strong, sudden, or worsening

Possible Western medical overlap

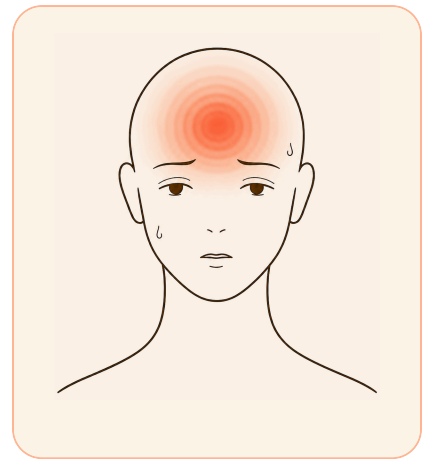
For general understanding only – not a diagnosis.

- Severe throat infections such as tonsillitis
- Acute infections with significant inflammation and fever
- In some cases, acute inflammatory illnesses such as mumps may be considered.

Summer Heat

暑热 (*Shǔ Rè*)

Heat from hot weather, often with dehydration or exhaustion



What it may feel like

- Pounding or frontal headache
- Exhaustion, thirst
- Overheating or dizziness

Often linked to

- Hot weather
- Sun exposure
- Dehydration

What may help

- Hydration (regular, not excessive at once)
- Cooling down gradually
- Rest in a shaded or cool space
- Seek medical support if symptoms are severe, sudden, or worsening

Possible Western medical overlap

For general understanding only – not a diagnosis.

- Heat exhaustion or heat-related headache
- Dehydration-related headache
- Sometimes associated with digestive upset during hot weather

A gentle note

These patterns are for general understanding only. If symptoms are severe, sudden, unusual, or worsening, please seek appropriate medical advice.



Chemin Holistique
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