

Soundbite Script – Broadcast – One Big Headache

Dr. Brandon Strawn, Neurologist, OSF HealthCare

“People can get headaches for any number of reasons. There are musculoskeletal reasons, people carry stress and tension in their neck and shoulders and back; sometimes people have environmental factors, weather changes, exposures to perfumes. Caffeine is a big one. We can either look at the increased rates of headaches from the standpoint of triggers increasing. Stress rates, anxiety, depression is all on the rise, caffeine use has increased every decade over the last 50 years – these are all reasons headaches have increased as well.”

Dr. Brandon Strawn, Neurologist, OSF HealthCare

“In general, headaches and particularly migraines are more common in women. There are thoughts to being hormonal underpinnings to that. We know some women will get migraines more commonly at a particular time of the month or during hormonal changes later in their lives. There are other studies going on that look at factors that are unique to women versus men, and that may also play a role in that increase in headaches.”

Dr. Brandon Strawn, Neurologist, OSF HealthCare

“The best practice for treating headaches usually comes down to the underlying cause. If a primary care doctor can identify a stressor or can help manage anxiety or depression or tension type headaches, they can arrange physical therapy for someone who has cervicogenic headaches (headaches coming from the neck) or they can start a first-line medication for migraine. In many cases they can address the problem pretty quickly.”

Dr. Brandon Strawn, Neurologist, OSF HealthCare

“I think the take-home message is everyone gets headaches but there are a lot of different options for treating those headaches and if we can find a root cause to address those triggers and manage that with a primary care doctor that would be the first goal we have. Beyond that there are many other options for managing symptoms and the pain in particular but ultimately with a methodical approach most people are going to find some relief.”