

WHAT ROLE DOES BIOFEEDBACK THERAPY HAVE IN THE TREATMENT OF MIGRAINE?

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What is the role of biofeedback and relaxation therapy in the treatment of migraine headache? Background: Migraine is a common condition in the United Kingdom and worldwide. The prevalence has been reported to be as high as 25% in women and 10% in men. The gate control theory as first described in 1965 by Melzack and Wall has stressed the importance of how numerous factors can influence the perception of pain. There are currently no well-conducted systematic reviews establishing the role of biofeedback and relaxation therapy in the treatment of migraine headache. Aim: To raise awareness of biofeedback and relaxation therapy and use an evidence-based approach to the treatment of migraine using biofeedback therapy. Methods: An extensive literature review of several databases was conducted. Only randomized controlled trials were included. Results: Whether administered alone or in combination with relaxation or cognitive therapy, thermal biofeedback therapy has been shown to reduce headache activity in adults suffering with migraine. Discussion: Studies comparing thermal biofeedback with relaxation therapy show that the latter is likely to be more effective and does not require any specialized equipment thus making it more applicable for use in a primary health care setting.