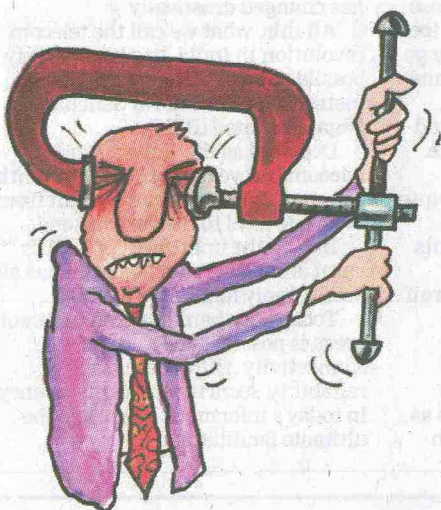


**d**octor's diary...

I am a 59-year-old male working in a multinational bank. I have been experiencing dull pain in my head especially at both the temples for the past 4-5 months, and it gets aggravated in the evenings. My sleep is disturbed partly due to my late working hours. I don't have blood pressure. I am a social drinker and smoke occasionally. I hear some people saying it could be a brain tumour or a clot in the brain. What should I do ?

Jayraj Thakkar, Bandra



From the description of your symptoms, which is essentially a dull bilateral temporal headache building up towards the evening, it sounds like you have muscle tension headache. Because of your hectic professional life, especially at this age, the muscles in your head (outside the skull bone) are constantly stressed. As a result of this, gradually as the day advances the tension in the muscles increase and produces the dull pain. You will notice that after you sleep in the night you are better off in the morning. This is because once you sleep, the scalp muscles also relax which in turn helps in reducing the pain. I am, however, concerned about the quality of your sleep. Lack of good sleep is not healthy at your age. A good sleep is the best way that you can recuperate after a hard day's work and it often prevents such headaches. You could change your lifestyle and incorporate some healthy habits like regular exercising, climbing staircases, getting a break during your working hours and certainly avoiding smoking and too much of coffee and tea. Your doctor will prescribe some muscle relaxing drugs to ease your pain. But these drugs have temporary effects and your lifestyle changes are more important in improving these headaches. You certainly don't have symptoms of a brain tumour or a clot. Headaches due to brain tumours are generally associated with vomiting, vision impairment, fits or weakness. An MRI of the head is done to rule it out, which is not recommended for you.



**Dr PP Ashok is consultant and head of neurology, Hinduja National Hospital**

Mail your health queries to Grandeur, DNA, Oasis Complex, Kamala Mills Lower Parel, Mumbai - 400013. Or e-mail [grandeur@dnainda.net](mailto:grandeur@dnainda.net).