

Transcript of interview on Radio 2UE- Healthy Living Show - 6-8pm Sundays Dr Ross Walker and Dr Len Rose - Sunday 21 Aug 2016 7.30pm

Ross: Around 12% of Australians suffer at least one significant migraine during their adult life. For some, it can be chronic and disabling. Dr. Len Rose is a general practitioner and former director of the Melbourne Pain Clinic. He's also an integrated practitioner, and he's on the line to discuss a new non-drug treatment for migraine and also for prevention as well. Good evening Len.

Len: Good evening, Ross.

Ross: Now, Len, could you tell us what is this new treatment?

Len: Very simply put, it's a new electronic device that makes the use of a long standing principle and practice of transcutaneous nerve stimulation. That's electrical stimulation through the skin with the nervous system interacting and responding to that stimulation by producing pain relief.

Ross: Right. That's straight forward. Neurostimulation. Tell us how it actually works. What do you do with the thing?

[00:01:00]

Len: Okay. The device is known as the **Cefaly**. It comes as a sort of headband. A very, very, modern looking headband that just sits on top of the ears like a pair of glasses. It has a single electrode, or a sticky electrode, that sticks between your eyebrows. Then the device actually locks onto that. When you press the button, there's a single button, the button can do three things, but the most important one is the first one, it can actually turn off migraine at the press of a button and usually within the first five to ten minutes.

Ross: This is quite extraordinary. Quite extraordinary. Look, are there any clinical trials of the Cefaly's efficacy?

Len: Yeah. Yeah. Look, there's been two major trials, and the first one a trial that was published in 2013 by a gentleman called Schoenen. He's actually one of the people who was involved in the development of the device. I think there was something like 60 odd patients that were looked at, and they did ... Although it's a very small study, they noticed that the Cefaly reduced migraine frequency, it decreased the number of days with migraine, and it produced a 50% reduction in the average monthly migraine days. It also reduced anti-migraine drug intake by anything up to 75% after three months.

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Then there was a larger study which was carried out by Russo and published in the Journal of Headache and Pain in 2015. They showed that 80% of patients who used this device continued to use it, and migraine days reduced from 6.5 to 3, and migraine attacks reduced from 4.5 to 2.06. There's substantial reduction in some of the most essential complaints involved with migraine.

[00:03:00]

Ross: Are there any downsides to using this thing?

Len: Very, very, few. I mean, like all transcutaneous nerve stimulators, because there's a single electrode which has a sticky gel on it, it's a reusable electrode, but it has a sticky gel, and sometimes you get an electrode chemical reaction to that gel which produces a very, very, small degree of burning or blistering. That's occurred in a tiny number of patients overall, and is consistent with the use of TNS, transcutaneous nerve stimulation.

The other very small drawback is that some patients don't like the sensation it produces which is a tingling sensation that runs from the eyebrows back to the crown of the head. [crosstalk

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- 00:03:44] distribution of the supratrochlear and the nerves, the branches of trigeminal nerve that run up into the scalp. It produces a very interesting sensation. Most people aren't put off by it, but a few people don't like it.
- [00:04:00]
- Ross: Having a migraine would be so much worse by the sound of it.
- Len: Oh yeah. This produces a very pleasant numbing sensation which runs, as I said, back from the eyebrows to the crown of the head -
- Ross: Sounds great.
- Len: - and in most patients, this results in both a reduction in pain and also a degree of sedation. People feel quite relaxed after they've used the machine for anything up to about several hours after they've used the device.
- Ross: This is quite extraordinary. How much does it cost?
- Len: It costs around \$400, but it is also available for rent. If a person doesn't want to spend that \$400 on a thing they don't know if it's going to work for them or not, they can rent this. The other fantastic thing is that a lot of the health funds will actually reimburse patients both for the cost and, to some extent, for the rental as well.
- [00:05:00]
- Ross: That's quite extraordinary. If anyone's listening to this who would like to purchase the Cefaly device. Now, let me spell that. That's C-E-F-A-L-Y. I've seen that the SciGgen people who make it, very kindly, have offered my listeners a \$25 discount if they purchase it over the next two weeks. If anyone would like to buy this, how can they go about this, Len?
- Len: They can do it either by going to the Cefaly web site. That's Cefaly.com.au.
- Ross: Hang on. We'll spell it again. C-E-F-A-L -Y
- Len: www.cefaly.com.au.
They can also purchase it through the Headache Australia website, through the Brain Foundation on the Headache Australia website. I noticed in my reading up on this prior to coming online, apparently that benefits the Brain Foundation, Headache Australia in particular.
- Ross: Look, this is extraordinary stuff. Len, I'd really like to thank you for your time tonight because there are many people out there that are disabled by migraine. If a non-drug way can help them, the last thing we want is for people to be using narcotics for this. A lot of people have to. If we can reduce the dependency people have on medications to treat their migraines with a simple device that, in reality, costs you \$400 and is yours for life, I just can't see why people wouldn't do it. That's incredibly important information for us. Dr. Len Rose, pain specialist from Melbourne.
- [00:06:00]
- Len: Your welcome, Ross.