

### 3.10 Care of People with Mental Health Problems - Tension headaches

Felicity 16 has exams coming up. She is complaining of headaches towards the end of the day, all the way around her head but especially at the back of the neck.

Provide: Your headaches sound typical of muscular tension headaches.

Elicit: Does that make any sense to you?

Provide: Sometimes tension headaches are caused by tiredness, or stress, but caffeine, alcohol and certain foods can play a part. Painkillers, strangely can make the headaches more of a problem. Painkillers taken regularly can cause medication overuse headaches, a type of dependence.

Elicit: Are you with me so far?

Felicity: Yes. What can I do about them?

Provide: Looking at how you balance the stresses in your life can often be helpful. As can relaxation techniques, yoga, tai chi, exercise and massage.

Elicit: What might suit you?

Felicity: I like the sound of Tai chi. There is a class at my gym.

Provide: It's a good idea to keep a headache diary, to figure out what triggers the headache so that you can minimise the triggers too.