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Beware- Headaches

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Beware ...

HEADACHES

by Margret Wallace

"AS FAR AS I'm concerned, Iowa State is just one headache after another," said one coed, and, according to the facts, she's not far from wrong.

Many students think of headaches as such simple things—the worst part about them is the frequency with which they come.

However, mention the word “headache” to the doctors at the college hospital, and they'll throw up their hands in alarm. Headaches are everything but simple, according to them. There are headaches, it seems, and then there are headaches. They can be symptoms of anything, from sinus infection to brain tumor. Then again, they can be nothing more than eyestrain, the after effect of reading shiny pages too long with a poorly adjusted lamp.

On a campus with the scholastic reputation of Iowa State, eyestrain is, of course, a very common source of headaches. But it is not the only important one.

**Functional Headaches**

One of the most troublesome kinds is known as the “functional headache”—71 were reported at the college hospital last fall quarter. Functional headaches are usually caused by fatigue combined with worry and they may be partly psychological, a defense mechanism for poor grades or other failures. Suppose your all college average was a 0.05 and your parents were pressing you for an explanation.

"Well," you might say, "I can't study. I've been having such awful headaches." It works! They pat you gently on the shoulder and press a bottle of aspirin into your hand with sympathetic murmurs.

First thing you know, you really will be having "awful headaches" and sometimes the aspirin helps and sometimes it doesn't.

The best thing to do in a case like that (and we use the term loosely) is to drop a few courses and go to bed—early and often. In fact, regardless of the cause of the pain, rest is a good idea.

Don't laugh when someone speaks of a contagious headache. Too often, headaches are warning signals for such things as scarlet fever or measles. So don't breathe on your roommate if you can't permanently cure your next headache. If it persists or keeps coming back, drag your self out from under that ice bag and run to the doctor.