

Low Back Pain

When you hear the word chiropractic do you think of care for back and necks complaints? Many people do and yet the world's first chiropractic patient (1895) was deaf and recovered his hearing after a chiropractic adjustment. The second chiropractic patient was relieved of a heart condition. Thousands soon praised chiropractic for saving them from headaches, colds, allergies, asthma, sciatica, arthritis, seizures, ear infections, stomach trouble, gynecological problems and many other conditions including back pain.

What does your Chiropractor do?

Your chiropractor is specially trained to locate and free your body from a severe abnormality that interferes with our proper function. It is called a subluxation and it is a slight misalignment or distortion of your structural system, including your spine, that affects your disks, nerves, ligaments, and ultimately, your entire body. Once your chiropractor frees you of subluxations, your body and mind function better.

Low Back Pain

Low back pain is very, very common. About 85 percent of the population will experience disabling low back pain at least once during their lives! That's almost all of us. The problem is so bad that according to one researcher, at any given time 6.8% of the US adult population is suffering from an episode of back pain lasting more than two weeks.

That's a lot of bad backs. The estimated cost of this problem in the US is over \$100 billion a year.

Medical Treatments and Surgery

The standard medical approach to back pain varies depending on the severity of the condition. Muscle relaxants, painkillers, rest and physical therapy such as traction, diathermy, ultrasound, hot packs and cold packs are sometimes used. These approaches are often found wanting however. Even bed rest has been found ineffective for a serious form of back and leg pain called sciatica.

If the problem doesn't improve or worsens then surgery may be recommended.

The medical approach is at times necessary – even back surgery has a place. But research is revealing that spinal surgery for acute lower back problems should rarely be performed.

According to Huber L. Rosomoff, MD, a speaker on "failed back surgery syndrome," at the American Academy of Pain Medicine (AAPM) 17th annual meeting (February, 2001), "You can eliminate 99% of the surgical cases. In fact, the incidence of surgery...is one in 500."

Failed Back Surgery Syndrome

Many of those who have had back surgery report a recurrence of their symptoms within a year or two of the operation and may return to the operating table. This has been referred to as failed back surgery syndrome. It causes severe and constant pain. Of the nearly 300,000 back surgeries performed each year, 20 to 40% fail.

Studies reveal that spinal surgery is not better than less invasive care; outcomes after five years are similar when surgical and non-surgical approaches are compared.

For example, Lynn Johnson, MD, of the American Academy of Pain Medicine states: "Just about any approach is better than having surgery because all the studies have shown that, if you take a surgical population and non-surgical population, they all seem to do the same in five years." He supports conservative measures such as chiropractic before suggesting surgery.

The Chiropractic Approach

Chiropractors have helped millions of people with low back problems, often saving them from pain, disability, drugs and surgery. The chiropractor's purpose is to gently and painlessly rebalance and realign your spine and body structure to relieve pressure on your nerves, discs and muscles. Research studies repeatedly reveal that chiropractic helps those with lower back pain to recover faster and at less cost. In one study of 700,000 people whose health insurance plan covered chiropractic care, it was estimated that \$16 million was saved as a result of using chiropractic.

Major government studies from the US, UK, Canada and New Zealand have reaffirmed what chiropractic patients have been telling their friends with back pain for years: "Why don't you see my chiropractor? You'll get better much faster than from drugs or surgery – and it's safer too." Studies repeatedly reveal that chiropractic care is more effective than other approaches from low back pain.

As one study concluded: "Chiropractic was particularly effective in those with fairly intractable pain – that is, those with a history of severe pain...The percentage of chiropractic patients who were 'very satisfied' with the care they received for low back pain was triple that for patients of family physician. Why are the results so overwhelmingly in favor of chiropractic? Because painkillers, muscle relaxants, Valium, braces physical therapy an surgery are not designed to correct subluxations. Chiropractic is!

In Conclusion

For over a hundred years people with all kinds of health conditions have visited their doctors of chiropractic. Many have initially come for back pain, but then discovered so many other ways chiropractic care can help them and their family

The goal of chiropractic is to free your body from subluxations, permitting realignment of your entire structural system and releasing pressure on your nerves so your entire body may function at its optimum.

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