

OPTIMAL HEALTH UNIVERSITY™

Presented by Dr. Shirley, Dr. Choate, Dr. Altringer, & Dr. Smith

Highlights of 2011 Chiropractic Research Back Pain, Neck Pain and Headaches: Part I

Your doctor at Spinal and Sports Care Clinic is committed to staying up-to-date with wellness research, and sharing this information with patients. When fully informed, patients are better able to make choices that propel them toward optimal health. That's why, at the close of each calendar year, your doctor at Spinal and Sports Care Clinic reviews the past year's studies on chiropractic. And, 2011 was a groundbreaking year for chiropractic research.

Last month, we focused on studies about how chiropractic corrects and prevents conditions other than back pain, such as autism, hearing problems and chest pain. This month, we present another two-part series on research involving more traditional chiropractic topics, such as back pain, neck pain and headaches.

As Effective as Surgery

Chiropractic care is often as effective as surgery for sciatica, say researchers who followed 40 patients. The patients had all tried other nonoperative treatments for at least three months with no results. These treatments included pain medication, lifestyle modification, physiotherapy, massage therapy and/or acupuncture.

The patients were randomly assigned to undergo spinal surgery or receive chiropractic care. Sixty percent of patients benefited from chiropractic to the same degree as if they underwent surgical intervention.



Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics
October 2010;33:576-84.
www.jmptonline.org

Costs Less

Chiropractic care for low back pain costs significantly less than treatment from a medical doctor, according to a claims analysis of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Tennessee.

Findings showed that care initiated with a doctor of chiropractic were almost 40 percent less than care initiated with a medical doctor.

Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics
November 2010;33:640-3.
www.jmptonline.org

Patients Need to be Heard

Your doctor at Spinal and Sports Care Clinic is known for taking time to listen to patients about their health concerns, in order to understand how their conditions are impacting their lives.

This chiropractic practice is built on the theory that patients who feel that they have insight into their health challenges are more motivated to participate in a speedy recovery and achieve long-term wellness. Now, a new study on people with sciatica sup-



ports this theory.

Researchers conducted in-depth interviews with 37 people with sciatica at baseline and again after 12 months.

Results revealed that "people needed to make sense of sciatica through identifying a cause and having it clinically diagnosed. ... Appreciation of this by clinicians was considered important, as well as the provision of clear information about treatment and prognosis."

Spine July 2011;36:1251-6.
www.spinejournal.com

Quells Headache

Chiropractic care is beneficial for many patients with headache, according to a large review study published in the *Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics*.

After pooling findings from 21 reports, the study's authors concluded that the scientific evidence shows that chiropractic care, including spinal manipulation, wards off headaches, including migraines.

Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics
June 2011;34:274-89.
www.jmptonline.org

**Dr. Shirley, Dr. Choate, Dr. Altringer, & Dr. Smith, (509) 922-0303
& Sports Care Clinic, www.spinalandsportscare.com
12905 E. Sprague Avenue, Spokane Valley, WA 99216**

Spinal

Improves Scoliosis

Chiropractic care may significantly improve scoliosis, say researchers.

The study enrolled 28 patients with scoliosis. For six months, patients received the same chiropractic rehabilitation program, including adjustments and exercises.

At the end of care, significant improvement was seen, including the angle of scoliosis measured on x-rays and the ability to breathe forcibly. Patients also reported significantly reduced disability ratings. What's more, the improvements were maintained at a follow-up visit two years later.

Journal of Chiropractic Medicine
September 2011;10:179-84.
journalchiromed.com

Lowers Pain Sensitivity

Spinal manipulation influences the pain response in healthy people, according to research conducted at the University of Florida in Gainesville.

As part of the experiment 90 healthy volunteers were randomly assigned to receive one of three interventions: 1) spinal manipulation, 2) exercise or 3) rest.

Before and after the intervention, researchers tested pain sensitivity in cervical and lumbar areas via thermal pain responses. Specifically, they tested for changes in temporal sensory summation (TSS), which is the arousal of impulses carried by the same sensory nerve cell.

Findings showed that participants who received spinal manipulation had greater reductions in TSS, compared with people in the exercise and rest groups.

Spine Journal April 2, 2011;Epub.
www.spine.org

Too Much too Soon

Medical guidelines suggest that immediate use of extensive imaging tests like magnetic resonance imaging, aggressive therapies and prescription drugs should be avoided in most cases of acute low back pain (LBP). However, the medical community is largely ignoring these guidelines, resulting in a flood of unnecessary tests and related costs, according to a study published in the *Spine Journal*.

As part of the analysis, investigators pored over insurance claims from 211,551 patients, aged 18 to 64 years, with LBP. They were compared with a group of patients without LBP, matched by age, gender and employment status.

In total, 42 percent of patients with LBP had imaging tests within a few months of diagnosis. And, 69 percent used medications, with 42 percent using opioids. Average medical costs for LBP patients' treatment was \$7,211 vs. \$2,382 for controls. The average cost for a LBP patient who underwent surgery was \$33,931.

"Contrary to clinical guidelines, many patients with LBP start incurring significant resource use and associated expenses soon after the index diagnosis," conclude the study's authors. "Achieving guideline-concordant care will require substantial changes in LBP practice patterns."

Fortunately, chiropractic offers a conservative, all-natural approach to ending LBP, which allows patients to avoid expensive tests, potentially hazardous and addictive medication, and unnecessary surgeries.

Spine Journal May 25, 2011;Epub.
thespinejournalonline.com

Cures "Wii-itis"

An article published in the *Journal of Chiropractic Medicine* indicates that chiropractic care may be highly effective in caring for children with electronic game overuse injuries (a.k.a. "Wii-itis").

The study, conducted at Life University in Marietta, Georgia, followed four children aged 3 to 9 years. The patients all had a triad of injuries commonly referred to as Wii-itis: 1) spinal pain, 2) spinal joint dysfunction and 3) related extremity pain. They also reported prolonged playing of the Nintendo Wii.

All patients had their complaints resolve with their first chiropractic visit.

"Children in the new era of portable electronic devices are presenting to chiropractic offices with a set of symptoms directly related to overuse or repetitive strain from prolonged play on these systems," conclude the study's authors.

Journal of Chiropractic Medicine
June 2011;9:84-9.
www.journalchiromed.com

Safe and Effective

A large review study published by the *Cochrane Library* confirms that chiropractic is as effective as common medical interventions, such as painkillers, for chronic low back pain. It is also safe.

The review authors looked at 26 randomized controlled studies on spinal manipulative therapy (SMT), including a total of 6,070 participants.

Cochrane Library February 16, 2011.
www.thecochranelibrary.com

Want to learn more? Don't forget to pick up Part II of this special Optimal Health University™ "back pain, neck pain and headaches" research series next week!

Optimal Health University™ is a professional service of PreventiveCare Publishing®. The information and recommendations appearing on these pages are appropriate in most instances; but they are not a substitute for consultation with a health care provider. *Optimal Health University™* may be photocopied (NOT reprinted) exactly as they are published noncommercially by current subscribers ONLY to share with patients or potential patients. *Optimal Health University™* may NOT be reprinted in any print or electronic publication including newsletters, newspapers, magazines or Web sites. Any other reproductions are subject to PreventiveCare Publishing® approval. Copyright, 2011. PreventiveCare Publishing®. 1-831-313-0335. www.preventicare.com