

OPTIMAL HEALTH UNIVERSITY™

Presented by Dr. Shirley, Dr. Choate & Dr. Glanville

Top 10 Ways Chiropractic Can Improve Your Life

Chiropractic isn't merely a drug-free alternative to easing pain. Rather, chiropractic offers patients a collection of potentially life-changing advantages. Your doctor at Spinal and Sports Care Clinic has outlined the top-10 exciting ways regular chiropractic wellness care may improve your life.

#10: Chiropractic Alleviates Pain

Instead of covering up pain with possibly hazardous medication, chiropractic addresses the underlying cause of pain disorders, such as headaches, low-back pain and sports injuries. Quite often, these conditions are linked to dysfunctional areas in the spine, known as *vertebral subluxations*, where movement is restricted or spinal bones (vertebrae) are misaligned. Your doctor at Spinal and Sports Care Clinic corrects vertebral subluxations with gentle, safe maneuvers known as *chiropractic adjustments*.

#9: Chiropractic Prevents Other Conditions

Chiropractic isn't just for pain — far from it. A growing body of research indicates that chiropractic adjustments may ward off a vast array of conditions. Disorders that may be helped by chiropractic range from infantile colic, ear infections and behavioral problems to PMS, high blood pressure and Parkinson's disease.

How might chiropractic prevent so many ailments? Researchers speculate that vertebral subluxations may affect nervous system functioning. Along with the brain, the spinal cord is the main component of the central nervous system, which controls nervous system functioning throughout the body and supplies nerves for all of the body's structures and organs. Re-

search indicates that dysfunctions in the spine may inhibit this delicate balance, in turn triggering a myriad of health concerns.

#8: Chiropractic Boosts Productivity

Chiropractic care elevates productivity at both work and play.

Regular chiropractic care may boost work performance by warding off work-related injuries, including carpal tunnel syndrome and low-back pain (LBP).

For instance, chiropractic care defuses LBP associated with sitting hour after hour in ergonomically incorrect chairs. "Sitting causes the pelvis to rotate backward and causes reduction in lumbar lordosis [the natural curve of the low back], trunk-thigh angle, and knee angle," note researchers. It also causes "an increase in muscle effort and disc pressure." (*J Manipulative Physiol Ther* 1999;22:594-609.)

Unremitting LBP can lead to work absence and higher medical costs: the focus of a study published earlier this year.

In a review of 250 employees receiving worker's compensation for LBP — 72 of whom had no physically therapeutic care — patients receiving spinal manipulation experienced greater reductions in pain and disability. This translated into lower thera-

peutic costs and a faster return to work (*Spine Jour* 2006;6:289-95).

Chiropractic care effectively restores proper spinal alignment and reduces low-back pain. Missing appointments, however, may foster a "one step forward, two steps back" scenario.

Chiropractic also boosts performance at sports. Professional athletes like Tiger Woods and Lance Armstrong rely on chiropractic care to reach optimal performance capacity.

#7: Chiropractic May Make You Smarter

Mapping of brain activity before and after chiropractic adjustments of the spine of the neck (cervical spine) reveals that chiropractic care stimulates cognitive function.

In a study involving 500 adult volunteers, researchers used cutting-edge technology to create maps of functioning in the cortical (exterior) portions of the brain before and after chiropractic adjustments of the cervical spine. Researchers found that "cervical manipulation activates specific neurological pathways" in the brain, potentially stimulating cognitive function (*J Manipulative Physiol Ther* 1997;20:529).



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Chiropractic adjustments also enhance response mechanisms in the brain, according to researchers in New Zealand who conducted a study involving 30 volunteers: all with evidence of cervical spinal joint dysfunction. Instead of cortical mapping, the researchers used reaction time to various stimulation as a gauge.

“Multiple sites of cervical spinal joint dysfunction were related to impaired cortical processing,” noted the researchers. This was demonstrated by “significantly less accurate response selection and a trend toward more variable performance of an anticipated response.” (*J Manipulative Physiol Ther* 2005;28:502-7.) After chiropractic adjustment, the volunteers demonstrated improved cortical processing and response selection.

#6: Chiropractic Boosts Immunity

Scientific research reveals that regularly scheduled chiropractic care may boost the body’s immune response. And a powerful immune system is a key component of chiropractic’s all-natural preventative strategy.

One study involved 11 patients over a nine-month period. The study provided preliminary information regarding chiropractic care and possible links to improved immune status. Chiropractic care also boosted other aspects of health and quality of life (*JVSR* 2006:1-6).

Another study indicates that chiropractic adjustments boost levels of polymorphonuclear neutrophils (PMN) and monocytes — white blood cells associated with a healthy immune system (*J Manipulative Physiol Ther* 1991;7:399-408).

#5: Chiropractic Reduces Stress

Chiropractic care slashes stress by allowing the body to achieve balance. In addition, chiropractic helps keep patients free of physical impediments to regular exercise, which is key to busting stress and preventing stress-related anxiety and depression.

And, while chiropractors do not treat depression, preliminary research dem-

onstrates that chiropractic adjustments may ease depressive symptoms. “It has been long speculated that chiropractic interventions may affect mental health problems,” note researchers.

To test this hypothesis, investigators followed 15 adults who were both clinically depressed and had a vertebral subluxation in the spine of their upper neck.

Before and after receiving a chiropractic adjustment, the subjects completed a standard assessment for depression called the Beck Depression Inventory II.

Results revealed a marked reduction in depression scores following the intervention (*JVSR* 2005:1-4).

#4: Chiropractic Increases Physical Activity

New patients frequently find that chiropractic care jumpstarts them toward a more wellness-oriented lifestyle. For instance, many chiropractic patients report increased motivation and ability to adhere to a regular exercise program.

#3: Chiropractic Allows Patients to Avoid Unnecessary Medication

Individuals who maintain regular chiropractic care are far less likely to overuse or misuse medication, which may have hazardous side effects.

Even seemingly benign over-the-counter pain medication may wreak havoc on the gastrointestinal system. In addition, long-term use of pain medication may actually exacerbate the very symptoms it was intended to reduce.

For instance, people who focus on prevention and maintain regular chiropractic care are less likely to develop medication overuse headache (MOH).

MOH is a relatively new term for a long-standing, “unnamed” and largely unrecognized condition caused by taking painkillers — daily or on a regular basis — for migraines or other headaches. Sadly, this condition is common. About one in 50 people de-

velops this problem at some point.

#2: Chiropractic Improves Sleep Quality

Chiropractic patients often enjoy improved sleep quality. This is due to a reduction in pain and anxiety, which often interfere with sleep. Improved sleep enhances immunity, in turn fighting disease.

And, exciting research links insomnia with vertebral subluxations, which may be corrected with chiropractic care.

The study pooled data on 221 patients being cared for by 15 chiropractors. According to the findings, “one third of the 154 patients who completed the semi-structured interview reported their sleep pattern was changed immediately after their chiropractic adjustment. All but one of these 52 patients reported improvement.” In the 20 patients with insomnia, improved sleep was noted in the six days following the chiropractic adjustment. However, no consistent trends were noted in the days and weeks following care, so additional research is necessary before a firm link may be established (*J Manipulative Physiol Ther* 2005;28:179).

#1: Chiropractic Creates Wellness

Regular chiropractic care empowers patients with what doctors of chiropractic call “health-esteem.” Patients learn to take charge of their own well-being in a way that catapults them to optimal health, increased longevity and heightened quality of life.

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