

Explanation of Chiropractic Care

Chiropractic is a health care profession that focuses on disorders of the musculoskeletal system and the nervous system, and the effects of these disorders.

Chiropractic is used most often to treat neuromusculoskeletal complaints, including but not limited to back pain, neck pain, joint pain, and headaches.

What is Spinal Manipulation?

One of the most common and well-known therapeutic procedures performed by doctors of chiropractic is spinal manipulation (sometimes referred to as a "chiropractic adjustment"). The purpose of spinal manipulation is to restore joint mobility by manually applying a controlled force into joints that have become hypo mobile – or restricted in their movement – as a result of a tissue injury.

Tissue injury can be caused by a single traumatic event, such as improper lifting of a heavy object, or through repetitive stresses, such as sitting in an awkward position with poor spinal posture for an extended period of time. Manipulation, or adjustment of the affected joint and tissues, restores mobility, thereby alleviating pain and muscle tightness.

Q: What conditions do chiropractors treat?

A: Doctors of Chiropractic (DCs) care for patients of all ages, with a variety of health conditions. DCs are especially well known for their expertise in caring for patients with back pain, neck pain, headaches, disorders of the musculoskeletal system, involving the muscles, ligaments and joints...particularly with manipulations or chiropractic adjustments.

Q: Is chiropractic treatment safe?

A: Chiropractic care is widely recognized as a safe, drug free, non-invasive therapy available for the treatment of neuromusculoskeletal complaints. Although chiropractic care has an excellent safety record, no health treatment is completely free of potential adverse effects. The risks, however, are low. Current research shows that any minor discomfort or soreness following spinal manipulation typically fades within 24 hours.

Q: Does chiropractic treatment require a referral from a physician?

A: A referral is usually not needed to see a doctor of chiropractic (DC); however, your health plan may have specific referral requirements. Most plans allow you to just call and schedule an appointment with a DC.

Q: Is chiropractic treatment appropriate for children?

A: Yes. Children can benefit from chiropractic care. Children are very physically active and experience many types of falls and blows from activities of daily living as well as from participating in sports. Chiropractic care is a highly skilled treatment, and in the case of children, very gentle and effective.

Q. How long should my treatment last?

People who feel better usually do so after just a few visits, and more visits may not be needed. Each treatment program is developed by the doctor of chiropractic care to specifically fit the patient's needs.

Q. Does spinal manipulation hurt?

Most patients report not experiencing any discomfort in the process of the adjustment. The likelihood of initial soreness or increased pain after a chiropractic adjustment is similar to that of starting an exercise program.

First Visit:

The main point of the first visit is to get an adequate examination and make a diagnosis. This may involve a few tests such as x-ray. Once you have been diagnosed, the doctor of chiropractic care will develop a personalized treatment plan.

Maintaining Good Posture

Posture is the position in which we hold our bodies while standing, sitting, or lying down.

Good posture is the correct alignment of body parts supported by the right amount of muscle tension against gravity. It helps with standing, walking, sitting, and lying in positions that place the least strain on supporting muscles and ligaments during movement and weight-bearing activities.

Correct posture:

- Helps keep bones and joints in correct alignment so that our muscles are used correctly, decreasing the abnormal wearing of joint surfaces that could result in degenerative arthritis and joint pain.
- Reduces the stress on the ligaments holding the spinal joints together, minimizing the likelihood of injury.
- Allows muscles to work more efficiently, allowing the body to use less energy and, therefore, preventing muscle fatigue.
- Helps prevent muscle strain, overuse disorders, and even back and muscular pain.

Poor posture can lead to excessive strain on postural muscles and may even cause them to relax, when held in certain positions for long periods of time.

How do I sit properly?

- Keep your feet on the floor or on a footrest, if they don't reach the floor.
- Don't cross your legs. Your ankles should be in front of your knees.
- Keep a small gap between the back of your knees and the front of your seat.
- Your knees should be at or below the level of your hips.
- Adjust the backrest of your chair to support your low- and mid-back or use a back support.
- Relax your shoulders and keep your forearms parallel to the ground.
- Avoid sitting in the same position for long periods of time.

How do I stand properly?

- Bear your weight primarily on the balls of your feet.
- Keep your knees slightly bent.
- Keep your feet about shoulder-width apart.
- Let your arms hang naturally down the sides of the body.
- Stand straight and tall with your shoulders pulled backward.
- Tuck your stomach in.
- Keep your head level-your earlobes should be in line with your shoulders. Do not push your head forward, backward, or to the side.
- Shift your weight from your toes to your heels, or one foot to the other, if you have to stand for a long time.

Can I correct my poor posture?

Yes. Long-standing postural problems will typically take longer to address than short-lived ones, as often the joints have adapted to your long-standing poor posture. Conscious awareness of one's posture and knowing what posture is correct, and with much practice, the correct posture for standing, sitting, and lying down will gradually replace your old posture.

Questions

The CORE Institute is dedicated to your outcome. If any questions or concerns arise, please call The CORE Institute at 1.866.974.2673.

Sourced from:

Wyatt, Lawrence H., DC, DACBR, FICC et al, (2016). *Journal of American Chiropractic Association- Online*, About Chiropractic & Spine Health and Wellness.