



Health News

from Ponte Vedra Wellness Center

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Chiropractic: Effective Beyond Just Pain Relief

If you do an internet search on the prevalence of back pain in North America, you will discover an alarming statistic: approximately 80-85% of the population experience at least one episode of disabling back pain in their lives. Most of these people report disturbances in their daily lives for a week or longer, and the vast majority of back pain sufferers say their back pain is a recurring problem.¹

Where do people go to find relief?

Many people go to their doctor to find help. Out of all patient visits to medical physicians' offices, musculo-skeletal disorders are the most common resulting diagnoses.² If you are looking for long term relief, you will not find it in the MD's office. The best most medical doctors can do is to offer you an explanation for the cause of your symptoms, and perhaps prescribe medication to reduce the inflammation and pain, however, these often only provide temporary relief.

The other option is for your MD to refer you to someone who specializes in the treatment of back pain. But who provides the best results?

Better options for back pain

There are many health care providers who offer assistance for patients with back pain. Orthopedic surgeons, chiropractors, physiotherapists, massage therapists and acupuncturists are the most popular. But how does one decide which of these is best?

When faced with any health challenge, most of us either seek treatments that are more effective (i.e. get us better faster), or accomplish the same thing for less money and fewer risks. Considering these factors, it is no surprise that chiropractic is used so often. Chiropractic is an effective treatment.

Chiropractic spinal manipulation is listed consistently in many publications and journals as an effective tool for back pain, especially when compared to sham adjustments (procedures used to give the patient the impression that an adjustment has been delivered when it actually was not), or therapies that have already been proven ineffective.^{3,4,5} In addition, it has also been shown to be a relatively safe option for those seeking for treatments that carry less side effects.

Exercise of the Week

Hip Thrust, Straight Legs (easier arm position)

(Consult your chiropractor before engaging in this or any other exercise.)

Start on your back with both feet on the ball, legs straight. Arms rest on the floor, straight out from the shoulders, palms up. Pushing down into the ball with both feet, lift your hips toward the ceiling. Stop when body is straight. Hold for 2 counts. Return to starting position.

Repeat 10-15 times.



What about the cost?

Given the economic burden of the back pain epidemic, the costs associated with patient care are a significant consideration. North Americans spend approximately \$50 billion on treatments for back pain annually.⁶

One recent study compared the cost of chiropractic, general medicine, or osteopathy when used as a first option for back pain sufferers. What the researchers found was that consultation with chiropractic doctors resulted in an outcome that was at least as beneficial as the other options (i.e. MD or DO), but cost 20-40% less.⁶ This shows the use of chiropractic for back pain can offer a greater value than the other options, and is a lesser economic burden on our health care system.

What are the patients saying?

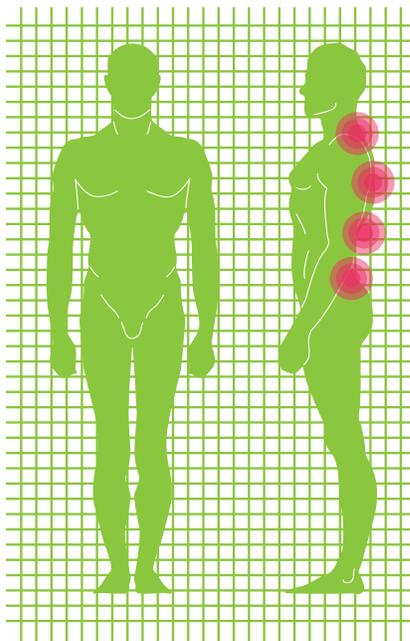
Choosing a healthcare provider who will help take good care of your body is a very important consideration. Before making this decision, we often seek the opinion of others. In his book *Stumbling on Happiness*, Daniel Gilbert reviews the available research on the topic, and he suggests that one of the most influential and consistent factors determining whether someone will be happy with a decision is to find out what others are saying after they made the same decision.⁷ Choosing the best option for your back care is no different.

Thankfully, experts on consumer trends have already done this research for us. They surveyed over 14,000 individuals who experienced back pain in the previous year (and did not receive surgery).

The results showed that out of five of the most popular therapists to consult for back pain (family physician or specialist, chiropractor, physical therapist and acupuncturist), chiropractors most often received the highest rating of satisfaction (completely or very satisfied) than all other professionals in the group. In general, therapists using manual techniques consistently achieved the highest ratings overall.⁸

Chiropractic is the best choice for back pain!

When all these different criteria are taken together (therapeutic effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, and patient satisfaction), chiropractic for back pain sufferers stands out as the treatment of choice. It is as effective, if not better, than any other treatments for acute and chronic back pain. It costs less than other studied treatments for the same condition and more patients report being highly satisfied with the care they receive from their chiropractor than all other treatment options studied.



Quote to Inspire

“You can’t depend on your eyes when your imagination is out of focus.”

- Mark Twain

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