

**CHIROPRACTIC
AND
CARPAL TUNNEL
SYNDROME**

Welcome To Great Health!

You are joining millions of others who have taken control of their health with chiropractic care. Chiropractic offers a natural, drug-free way to not only regain your health, but also to maintain it.

We're glad you are taking the time to learn more about the incredible science, art and philosophy chiropractic provides. We want you to benefit greatly from the next several pages, so let's explain the contents.

You will be examining literature from both the popular press as well as that of medical literature. While we don't expect you to be well versed in the medical terminology, we do believe that you deserve the information at your fingertips. The doctor will be happy to discuss any of the articles with you.

You may notice articles designed to inform you about the potential side effects of certain medication. There will also be medical literature that supports chiropractic as a possible means of helping your body to regain health. In addition, you will review survey material praising chiropractors for their efforts. Lastly, you will note a Family and Friend Health Profile. We suggest that you complete this form and return it to your chiropractor as soon as possible.

Remember, the more you know about your health, the healthier you will be. The sooner your doctor of chiropractic examines you the sooner you can be on the road to good health. The longer you wait for help the worst the condition becomes. Delays will only hurt you more and cost you more!

The Role of Chiropractic in Good Health

Although chiropractors work primarily upon the spine, their goal is to improve the health of your entire body.

A chiropractor is a specialist that works diligently to detect and correct vertebral subluxations. Vertebral subluxations occur when the spinal column has become "misaligned." This misalignment produces interference in your nervous system. Your nervous system is responsible for controlling every function of your body.

Henry Windsor M.D. noted in the Medical Times that he found a nearly 100% correlation between "minor curvatures" of the vertebrae and diseases of the internal organs. His findings were indeed profound.

A chiropractic adjustment is the means by which your D.C. (Doctor of Chiropractic) corrects vertebral subluxation. Regardless of age or physical condition, everyone needs a nervous system free of interference.

Please review the following pages and learn about the benefits of chiropractic care for you and your entire family...

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome Disability

According to an analysis by the Washington State Department of Labor, carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) is more likely to keep a worker off the job than low back pain or a fracture. Twenty-seven percent of patients diagnosed with CTS were out of work for at least six months. Among workers 45 years and older, the figure was 37 percent.²¹

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²¹. Presented at the Seattle meeting of the American Academy of Neurology in May by Dr. Gary Franklin, medical director of the state of Washington Department of Labor and Industries.

Industrial Consulting

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

The problem of work-related injuries has been around for centuries. In fact, the first record of an industrial injury dates back to ancient Egypt when a laborer involved in construction of the pyramids reported a back injury to his employer (Putz-Anderson, 1988). In more recent times, employers have gradually accepted the need to provide a safe working environment for their employees. The workers' compensation system has been developed to provide necessary assistance to those who are injured while on-the-job (OTJ) (Innico, 1986). Often, when we talk about work-related injuries, we consider traumatic incidents such as falls from a ladder or a back strain from lifting a particularly heavy object. However, with some of the changes that have occurred in the workplace (i.e., increased mechanization; assembly line production, computerization, etc.) many of the major accidents that were so common years ago have been replaced with a newer type of problem, the cumulative trauma disorder (CTD).

Today, this type of condition is one of the fastest growing of all work-related injuries. In some industries, such as meat-packing, the prevalence of such injuries may reach as high as 98 percent of the work force (Pheasant, 1991). The Bureau of Labor Statistics recently identified ergonomic disorders as the fastest growing category of occupational illnesses. In 1992 they accounted for 56 percent of illnesses reported to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). In contrast, in 1981, CTDs accounted for only 18 percent of occupational injuries (Pheasant, 1987). In addition, being more and more common, CTDs can be extremely expensive. As an example, Blue

Cross of California, an insurance company with a heavy reliance on computers, spent an average of \$20,000 on each of 30 claims. One severe claim of carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) may cost as much as \$100,000 (Mosely et al., 1991).

There is a growing body of evidence that spinal manipulation, as performed by chiropractors, offers a cost-effective alternative to more traditional methods for treating back pain. Unfortunately, there is not much evidence in the literature that chiropractic has any significant role in the treatment of disorders such as carpal tunnel syndrome. Recently, however, a study published in the *Journal of Hand Surgery* offers some evidence that conservative management of carpal tunnel syndrome may, in many instances, be superior to surgery. The study was performed by Dr. Susan Mackinnon, professor of surgery at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis. In the study, the authors evaluated 64 patients with various cumulative trauma disorders ranging from carpal tunnel syndrome to neck and shoulder pain. Thirty-four of the patients had previously undergone surgery; 26 for CTS and eight for cubital tunnel surgery. None of these had reported any significant relief following their operations. Nineteen of the patients had previously received some form of physical therapy for their conditions.

Dr. Mackinnon states that wrist pain or discomfort was not the only symptom that the patients were complaining of. Rather, most patients actually presented with multiple problems. These included multiple sites of nerve irritation, physical fatigue, and muscle imbalances. With this in mind, treatment was di-

rected at getting muscles back into balance. This was accomplished by teaching patients to stretch tight muscles and to strengthen weak muscles. In addition, patients were taught which postures were most likely to decrease pressure on nerves and to reduce muscular imbalance. Based on her research, Dr. Mackinnon states that surgery is often not necessary nor recommended. Instead, physical therapy, education and workplace modifications can effectively eliminate most patient's pain without the need for surgery. According to the author, "This translates into tremendous cost savings for patients and insurance companies."

The concept that patients with cumulative trauma disorders such as carpal tunnel syndrome, may present with problems in the neck, upper back, and shoulders is presented as a somewhat revolutionary and "new" finding. This "discovery" is certainly not new to those of us in the chiropractic profession. What is so exciting about this study is its treatment implications. For many years, conservative therapy for patients with carpal tunnel syndrome has largely focused on bracing and rest, i.e., removing activities that create discomfort. When such conservative measures have failed to produce any significant gains, surgery often follows. While surgery may offer some temporary relief for patients with CTS, it rarely results in any significant long-term improvement. Now, it appears, there is evidence that measures that are commonplace in the chiropractic office, may actually be preferable. In addition, Mackinnon states that, while most patients felt



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significantly better following a course of treatment, they were not cured. Instead, she claims they will have to commit to a lifetime of good posture, work habits, and exercise. What a concept!

In conclusion, there is ample evidence in the literature (both chiropractic and non-chiropractic) to support the use of spinal manipulation for some types of back pain. There is an increasing amount of evidence to support the use of manipulation for neck pain and headaches. The chiropractic profession must provide similar evidence to support the use of chiropractic care for other cumulative trauma disorders, such as carpal tunnel syndrome. In this changing health care arena of evidence-based services, we don't have much time to waste.

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Editor's note: If you have any questions, suggestions, or comments please write to Dr. Hooper at 21343 Cold Springs Lane, Suite #443, Diamond Bar, California 91765.

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Surgeon Says Carpal Tunnel Syndrome Related to Nerve Pressure

A professor of surgery at the medical school at Washington University in St. Louis has been thinking a lot about repetitive strain injuries such as carpal tunnel syndrome. Susan MacKinnon does not think surgery is the answer for a large number of these cases.

The high failure rate has caused her to rethink the causes of such disorders. She has noticed that even when extremity surgery improves the peripheral symptoms such as numbness in the hands, other associated problems like neck stiffness and shoulder pain persist.

She has written a paper published in a recent issue of the *Journal of Hand Surgery* that proposes this explanation for carpal tunnel syndrome: unnatural postures for extended periods of time create pressure on the nerves in the neck, leading to the neurological and other symptoms.

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How Chiropractic Helped This Composer Play the Piano

Redd Stewart, composer of *The Tennessee Waltz* and 400 other songs, fell down a flight of stairs three years ago. He recovered from his bumps and bruises, but continued to have coordination problems with his left arm and leg, so much so that he was unable to play the piano, which was a real blow to him. He had extensive tests by no less than seven doctors, including a brain scan and MRI of his brain, and was told that nothing could be done for him.

It Took Only Three Adjustments

He came through the Whitaker Wellness Clinic residence program, and was referred to Dr. Brian Porteous, D.C., for chiropractic adjustment. Dr. Porteous adjusted the Redd's atlas bone, which was misaligned and was putting pressure on the brain stem, interfering with the electrical signals from the brain to the extremities. After one adjustment, he experienced increased control in the movements of his left hand, and after two more, the improvement in his motor control was remarkable.

He called last week from Louisville, Kentucky, where he lives, and said that he was playing the piano for the first time in three years!

IMPORTANT PATIENT INFORMATION
CONCERNING CHIROPRACTIC CARE

New Studies Back Chiropractic Doctors

A prominent medical journal recently revealed that medical patients take almost four times longer to get well than do patients of chiropractic doctors. This study carried in the March 1989 *Western Journal of Medicine*, disclosed the surprising information that during the eight-month study, back pain patients of medical doctors spent an average 39.7 days returning to normal activity, while chiropractic patients spent an average of only 10.8 days. The same study found that chiropractic patients are three times more likely to be "very satisfied" with their care as are patients of medical doctors. Group Health Cooperative of Puget Sound conducted this study of 215 medical patients and 242 chiropractic patients in April 1986.

Chiropractic doctors have secured a place in the health care spectrum in spite of some strident opposition by a segment of organized medicine. For years, these specialists in spinal biomechanics have claimed success in an area where their medical colleagues have experienced frustration—the diagnosis and treatment of back pain. These success claims were based on their positive results with patients. Now, medical and consumer studies are revealing facts that validate these chiropractic assertions.

Another research project was commissioned by the California Chiropractic Association to measure doctors' effectiveness from the consumer's perspective. This survey conducted by the independent Home Testing Institute found that patients rated chiropractic doctors much higher than medical doctors for a variety of skeletal and muscular conditions. As the chart below shows, patients rated chiropractic doctors more effective than medical doctors by no less than 13 percent and by as high as 27 percent.

Newly-elected President of the California Chiropractic Association (CCA), Merlyn Green, DC of Salinas, suggests that these facts are not surprising to most chiropractic doctors. "This could be the greatest story never told," said Dr. Green. "Finally the

general public is beginning to hear the excellent results that chiropractic doctors have obtained for their back pain patients," he added.

According to figures released by the CCA, 14.9 percent of California adults over age 25 have seen a chiropractic doctor within the last two years. Back pain is a major health problem and has been estimated to occur in 80 percent of the population between 25 and 69 years of age.

The CCA is embarking on a massive state-wide public information campaign to share

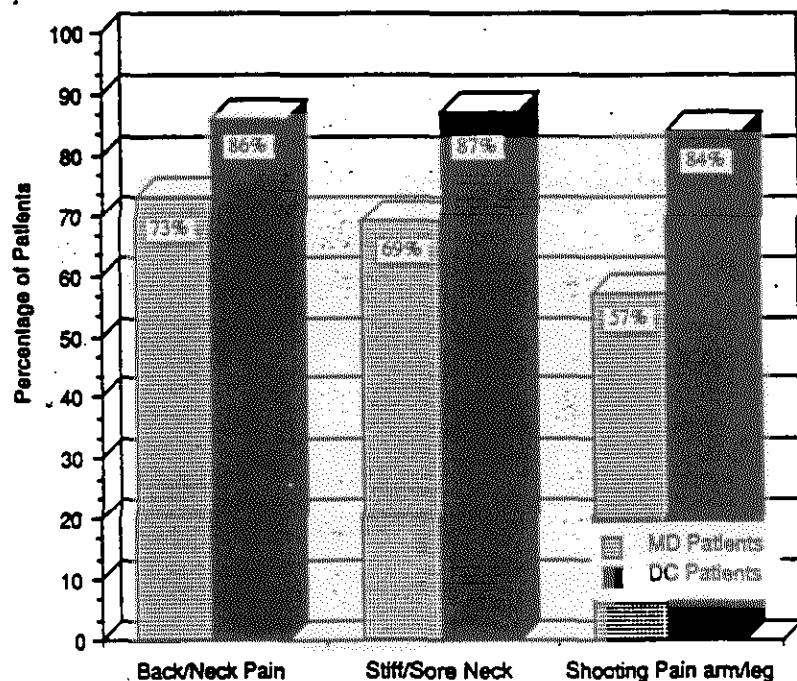
this new data with interested consumers. Radio ads are airing in sixteen radio markets in California, describing the results of recent back pain research and encouraging consumers to consider chiropractic. For the last one and one half years, CCA has also sponsored professional advertising in the California circulations of the general interest consumer magazines *Newsweek*, *People*, *Sports Illustrated*, and *Business Week*. □

PATIENT EVALUATIONS OF TREATMENT SUCCESS

| | MD Patients | DC Patients |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Back/Neck Pain | 73% | 86% |
| Stiff/Sore Neck | 69% | 87% |
| Shooting Pain in Arm/Leg | 57% | 84% |

Home Testing Institute Research - March 1989

Patient Evaluations of Treatment Success



Home Testing Institute Research — March 1989

New Survey Rates Chiropractors

Exactly how effective is chiropractic care when measured against traditional medical treatment? According to *Prevention*, which claims to be America's leading health magazine, "... clearly, chiropractors are doing something right."

Prevention has been widely criticized in the past for ignoring or trivializing alternative methods of health care, and for promoting the "pill

for every ill" approach to medical problems. The October 1989 issue of the magazine contains the results of an exclusive survey on chiropractic care. Prevention commissioned the survey in an attempt to determine if people who go to chiropractors find the relief they are looking for. Based on the answers from people who had seen a chiropractor at least once, the survey proved to be an impressive show of support for the profession: three out of four people polled said that chiropractors were successful in correcting their health problems. On the whole, chiropractic patients realized greater relief from pain, were happy with the number of visits required and found chiropractors friendlier and more supportive than medical doctors.

Although some patients were aware that chiropractic care was effective in correcting the causes of migraine headaches, neck pains, whiplash injuries, scoliosis, allergies and chronic fatigue, most still sought help for back problems. The *Prevention* survey was another step in documenting the positive results that can be achieved through chiropractic care. According to the magazine:

- seventy-six percent said they would go back to a chiropractor, the majority of which would do so "without a second thought";
- nearly sixty percent of those who noticed a difference felt they received more lifestyle counseling, more advice on exercising and more nutritional information from their chiropractor than from a medical doctor;
- three times more respondents said their chiropractors are friendlier and more concerned about their patients than medical doctors;
- three-quarters of respondents selected their chiropractor based on recommendations from friends, relatives or neighbors, while fourteen percent let their fingers do the walking through the telephone yellow pages or made their selections based on advertisements. Only five percent were referred by a medical doctor. ■

DID YOU KNOW?

"EVERY FUNCTION OF THE HUMAN
BODY IS UNDER CONTROL OF THE
NERVOUS SYSTEM."

- Grays Anatomy, 29th edition, p.4