

What is chiropractic?

The word chiropractic is of Greek derivation and means, “done by hand.” Chiropractic is a system of therapy that helps maintain a patient’s health and well-being through spinal manipulation. Spinal manipulation involves adjusting the vertebrae in the spinal column without the use of drugs or surgery. Chiropractic is the science, art, and philosophy of locating and correcting vertebral subluxations through gentle, specific chiropractic adjustments, thus allowing your body to heal and function at its optimum potential. Chiropractic adjustments help restore motion, block pain, restore normal sensation, relax tight muscles, remove swelling, and accelerate healing.

What are subluxations?

A subluxation is a misalignment of one or more of the twenty-four vertebrae in your spine. Subluxations can interfere with your nervous system, which inhibits your body’s ability to heal itself and function at its optimum level. A subluxation causes restrictions around joints that the body is unable to overcome itself. Subluxations can result in muscle spasm, swelling, scar tissue formation and pain.

How do you get subluxations?

There are three basic causes of vertebral subluxation. First is physical stress which includes: slips and falls, motor vehicle accidents, repetitive motion, sports injuries, poor posture and ergonomic stress. Second is chemical stress which includes: improper diet, smoking, alcohol abuse, and overuse of drugs or medications. And third is emotional stress which has far reaching effects.

Can I tell if I have a subluxation?

Although most people are alerted to health problems due to pain, subluxations are often painless. Subluxations may be present for a long time before symptoms appear. That is why periodic spinal check-ups are so important. Just as you would regularly schedule a dental check-up or a physical exam, you should schedule a spinal exam.

What is an adjustment?

[Adjustments](#) are the treatments used by chiropractors to reduce the subluxations or bony misalignments. There are a large number of techniques used to adjust the vertebrae. After examining the patient, the appropriate technique is chosen to provide the adjustment. The purpose of the adjustment is to remove nervous system interference and improve spinal function, which improves overall health.

What causes the sound of an adjustment?

Actually, not all adjusting techniques produce a sound. However, the techniques that do produce a sound do so as a result of gas rushing into the

joint space in order to fill the partial vacuum created when the joints are slightly separated. This is typically painless and causes no harm.

Is it bad to “crack” your neck or back yourself?

YES! The reason that you may feel like you need to “crack” or pop your neck/back is due to tension created by a jammed or fixed vertebra. This in turn causes another area of the spine to compensate by moving too much. It is this area that you “crack” on your own. It is the jammed area that a chiropractor is trained to find and adjust in order to provide proper function and spinal balance.

Are chiropractic adjustments safe?

Yes! Years of education, training, and experience make chiropractic care safe. Chiropractic is a conservative, natural and safe healing art. One can compare malpractice insurance premiums between chiropractors and other health care practitioners to evaluate the level of risk. Chiropractors’ premiums are a small fraction of those of medical doctors, especially orthopedists and surgeons. Of course, there are risks associated with manipulation. That is why it is so important that you have someone that has had years of schooling in treating the spine and extremities care for you. Having an untrained person “crack” your back, walk on your spine or take a weekend class is not a safe alternative.

Do chiropractors prescribe medications?

NO. Chiropractic is a holistic, natural healing art. It relies on the natural ability of the body to heal itself. Typically, along with the adjustment, ice and heat can help reduce pain. When properly applied, these treatments can help reduce and control pain without the unwanted side effects of medication.

How often should I get a spinal adjustment?

Ideally, as soon as you develop a subluxation. However, since subluxations are often painless, it is a good idea to have your spine checked at least twice a year.

Do chiropractors adjust anything other than the spine?

Yes. Specially trained chiropractors also adjust extremities. Your extremities consist of your hands, wrists, elbows, shoulders, feet, ankles, knees and hips. So conditions affecting those areas such as; bunions, plantar fasciitis, heel spurs, knee pain, carpal tunnel, tennis/golfer’s elbow, and rotator cuff injuries are helped by specially trained chiropractors, like the [doctors at Boyd Chiropractic Clinic](#).

Can I receive care if I have arthritis?

There are various forms of arthritis and many patients that get significant results with chiropractic care. Depending on the patient and the form of arthritis, the results will vary. Osteoarthritis is the most common form of

biomechanical arthritis and chiropractic adjustments reduce the biomechanical restrictions associated with this form of arthritis, thus providing relief from stiffness and pain.

I'm pregnant. Can I see a chiropractor?

Seeking chiropractic care during pregnancy is a logical choice. Because of the inability to take pain medication during pregnancy, chiropractic provides natural and safe health care for women. Chiropractors are trained in special adjusting techniques for pregnant women to provide the safest treatment to both mom and baby. Obstetricians and midwives tout the safety and effectiveness of chiropractic treatment during pregnancy by referring more and more "moms to be" to chiropractors.

What if I have a "slipped" or injured disc?

Discs cannot actually "slip" due to the way they attach above and below the vertebra. Discs are made up of fibrous outer rings and a jelly-like center. Discs can dehydrate, decay, tear, bulge, rupture, or fragment, but they cannot slip. However, patients that do have disc injuries, like a disc bulge, rupture or herniation, are treated with a Flexion/Distracton technique.

What if I think I have a pinched nerve?

A pinched nerve is a rare occurrence. Typically, the pain that you are feeling is coming from the subluxation. The subluxation causes irritation and inflammation in the adjacent spinal joints. It also has the ability to cause a stretching of the nerve. Nerves are highly sensitive structures and respond with pain to being stretched and surrounded by inflammation. A chiropractor can determine if you have a "pinched" nerve or another condition causing your pain. Chiropractors will also work with your other physicians to determine your best course of treatment.

Do children need chiropractic care?

Yes. By eliminating postural abnormalities and reducing problems like growing pains and knee pains, our children can grow up pain free, with minimal stress on their young musculoskeletal systems.