

The Adjustment is All it's Cracked Up to BE

There is more to the art of chiropractic than just the snap, crackle, and pop.

No two chiropractors are alike. There are over 100 different techniques in chiropractic, albeit only about 20 are popularly used. Consider that every practitioner applies their own art form to the techniques they use, thereby creating endless variations.

Therefore, a chiropractic adjustment in one office would be different from the office next door. However, all good chiropractors base their work on scientific evidence and logical reasoning.

What is the chiropractic adjustment? Simply put, the chiropractic adjustment moves bone. (The art of chiropractic is the doctor's preference as to how the bones are moved) By adjusting, the position of the bones change, affecting the muscles attached to the bones and the overall posture of the patient.

Why would someone want his/her body to be adjusted? There are a myriad reasons:

- A profound affect on the brain
- Affects the nervous system in such a way that it improves balance and relaxes tight muscles
- It restores motion so that waste products and edematous fluid can be pumped away efficiently and naturally.
- Normalizes biomechanics and load distribution, minimizing injuries and degeneration
- Improves nutrition to discs and cartilage
- Accelerated healing (movement increases metabolic rate, collagen and protein production)
- Improves alignment of new connective tissue

Intuitively one can understand that the adjustment restores motion, but the other aspects may involve some explanation.

The global effect of the adjustment: In order for your brain/body to function optimally, it requires several key ingredients: glucose (food), oxygen, and activation (stimulation). We eat the food, we breathe the oxygen, but how do we activate our brain? Ninety percent of activation to the brain comes from knowing where we are in space, termed proprioception. The proprioceptive receptors are located in joints, muscles, and ligaments, and are most densely located in the spine. It is through these receptors that chiropractors are able to have such a profound affect on the nervous system, enhancing balance, and improving coordination. The nervous system is what keeps us functioning, so if we can optimize brain function, then everything from blood pressure to bowel function can be optimized too.

The local effect of the adjustment: With the restoration of motion and alignment, waste products that accumulate can be effectively dissipated and the surrounding joints will not have as much strain. To illustrate this concept, think about several moveable objects like in a car engine, adjacent to one another that work together to get a job done. Over time, one aspect of the working unit fails to move properly, the other objects have more work to do and therefore degenerate more quickly. Body mechanics are no different...

Let us take the two extremes of full range of motion and no motion of the spine. If full range of motion activates the brain optimally and reduces strain on the surrounding joints, then no motion would do just the opposite. Everyone is likely to fall somewhere between these two extremes and it is advisable to lean more towards the full range of motion side.