

Leach

Chiropractic Clinic, Inc.

Robert A. Leach, D.C., M.S., F.I.C.C., Director

Research Chair, Mississippi Alliance Health Physical Education Recreation and Dance

Research Chair, Mississippi Chiropractic Association

Alternate Delegate for Mississippi, American Chiropractic Association

Postgraduate Faculty, National University for Health Sciences

May 2007 Newsletter:

Adjustments for Neck Pain?

Dear Patients and Friends:

There is growing evidence to support the use of chiropractic or spinal manipulation for the treatment of chronic mechanical neck pain.

Writing in the March/April 2007 issue of the *Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics*, Howard Vernon, DC, Ph.D., Kim Humphreys, DC, Ph.D., and Carol Hagino, MBA, found 19 randomized control group trials, including 16 deemed of adequate quality, that compared chiropractic/manipulation to massage or other non-manipulative treatment.

The studies showed that manipulation or mobilization resulted in clinically important improvement in chronic neck pain at 6, 12, and up to 104 weeks post-treatment. They concluded that current evidence does not support a similar level of benefit from massage alone. This is important news because it runs counter to reports in the lay press suggesting no benefits accrue from receiving chiropractic for neck pain, and therefore that any risks associated with chiropractic care would not be justifiable.

Indeed, there is good preliminary evidence chiropractic is more effective for neck tension and migraine headache, and that patients take less non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs; for example aspirin or ibuprophen) to control their remaining headaches even 6 months after a one month trial of chiropractic, as opposed to patients randomized to migraine medications only. Taken together, these studies document clearly higher risks associated with continuing NSAID use (i.e., ~1:30,000 risk of bleeding ulcers, and 7,500 deaths annually in the U.S.), as compared with chiropractic use (i.e., somewhere from 1:400,000 to 1:5.8 million treatments may result in a serious accident such as a stroke). And by the way, remember that about 1 in 75 of us will die in a motor vehicle accident. Now that's scary, but apparently not scary enough to keep us in seat belts, and off our cell phones!

So, at a minimum, early evidence suggests chiropractic manipulation is more effective, changes natural history of chronic neck pain, and may be in excess of 10 times safer than taking NSAIDs. That should come as welcome news to the Americans who will log 250 million visits to their chiropractor this year alone, 105 million of which will be for neck pain treatment.

Finally, remember that exercise is your "daily adjustment," critical for optimal treatment benefit. So get your adjustments, do your exercise, and please tell your friends and loved ones to visit our website or schedule a consultation for treatment of their acute or chronic neck pain, and muscle tension or migraine headaches. They'll appreciate you after they get relief!

Sincerely,

Dr. Robert A. Leach

For More Resources on this subject:

- For information on the primary research reference for this newsletter, based on the results of 16 clinical trials of spinal manipulation and chiropractic: http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&cmd=Retrieve&dopt=AbstractPlus&list_uids=17416276&query_hl=2&itool=pubmed_docsum
- For the link to the layman's article that appears in the May 2007 issue of Self: http://www.self.com/livingwell/articles/2007/04/0507chiropractors_singlepage
- For information on risks of death: <http://www.nsc.org/lrs/statinfo/odds.htm>
- For information on risks of GI bleeding associated with NSAIDs: <http://www.gastro.org/wmspage.cfm?parm1=2211>

To assess these links online, go to: www.drleach.com and click on *Newsletters, May 2007*

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214 Russell St., Starkville, MS 39759 662-323-2371 rl@drleach.com