

[IMAGE]

Is Back Pain in Your Future?

Chiropractors know that many things cause low back pain (LBP), including various physical, psychological, and personal characteristics. The effects of work on LBP are often studied; however, little research has focused on previous experiences causing LBP later in life. A recent study in the American Journal of Public Health investigated whether psychological stress can cause LBP a decade later.

Approximately 600 people in Britain who first suffered back pain at age 32-33 were compared to over 5,000 others who did not suffer from back pain. Back-pain information was obtained twice: from a current questionnaire and another completed 10 years previously. Only those with no LBP at age 23, but with later onset, were considered. Psychological stress in patients at age 23 was based on factors including low socioeconomic status, poor grades in school, behavioral problems, and early parenthood.

Those who reported stress at age 23 were two-and-a-half times more likely than their peers to have LBP a decade later. Smoking a half a pack or more of cigarettes per day throughout the 10 years also increased incidence of LBP. Overall, 10 percent of people with no back pain when younger reported it 10 years later.

Many studies have shown that stress leads to back and neck pain. Even if you aren't dealing with back pain now, minimize stress as much as possible to avoid future occurrence. Exercise can aid in stress management. Your doctor of chiropractic can help outline a stress-management program suitable to your needs.

Reference:

Power C, Frank J, Hertzman C, et al. Predictors of low back pain onset in a prospective British study. *American Journal of Public Health* 2001;91(10), pp. 1671-1678.

For more information on back pain, check out <http://www.chiroweb.com/tyh/backpain.html>.

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