

[IMAGE]

## A "Bone" of Contention

"Bone-setting" is a type of traditional manipulative therapy utilized by folk healers in Finland. This form of therapy is considered the basis for the development of modern chiropractic and osteopathy. Researchers recently sought to find out if this predecessor to chiropractic is as valid as modern manipulative therapy.

In this study, published in the *Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics*, over 100 patients who had suffered back pain for at least seven weeks were divided into three groups, based on the treatment they received: bone-setting (by four traditional healers), physiotherapy, or light exercise. Up to 10 treatment sessions were allowed over a six-week period. Disability scores were calculated at the end of the treatment and three, six, and 12 months later.

The bone-setting group showed the highest improvement in disability scores (each time scores were taken); an analysis of the additional therapies showed a smaller subgroup experienced an even more enhanced effect from bone-setting. The physiotherapy patients showed a decrease in health-center visits for their back pain, however, unlike the other two groups.

Bone-setting may be more effective than light exercise or physiotherapy for back pain. The simple fact that this form of therapy has survived so long suggests that it offers valuable health benefits, which will come as no surprise to chiropractors and their patients. Your doctor of chiropractic can tell you more about the history of chiropractic, or you can read about it at <http://www.chiroweb.com/find/whatis.html>.

### *Reference:*

Hemmila HM, Keinanen-Kiukaanniemi SM, Levoska S, et al. Long-term effectiveness of bone-setting, light exercise therapy, and physiotherapy for prolonged back pain: A randomized controlled trial. *Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics* 2002;25(2), pp. 99-104.

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