

[IMAGE]

Therapies Not Neck-and-Neck

Between 10-15% of people suffer from neck pain, which is most commonly seen in middle-aged individuals and women. Chiropractors often provide a form of manual therapy called "mobilization," in addition to cervical adjustments, intended to increase neck flexibility and reduce pain.

In a recent study from the Netherlands, 183 patients with neck pain lasting at least two weeks were divided into three groups and received either manual therapy, physical therapy, or continued care from a general practitioner. Manual therapy involved weekly "hands-on" techniques in which "experienced manual therapists" sought to decrease restrictions in neck range of motion; physical therapy focused primarily on exercise in 30-minute sessions twice per week; and general practitioner care involved advice on recovery, self-care, and ergonomics.

After seven weeks of treatment, the success rate was nearly twice as high in the manual therapy group as in the group receiving care from a general practitioner. The recovery rates were 68%, 51%, and 36% for the manual therapy, physical therapy, and general care groups, respectively. The manual therapy patients had half the absences from work due to pain during the study as the other two groups. Also, manual therapy proved better than physical therapy in all outcome measures in this study in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

The fundamental objective of manual therapy is restoration of normal joint motion. This goal was attained in the study, with a "relatively large" increase in neck range of motion. If you are suffering from neck pain, your chiropractor can treat your symptoms with manual therapy, adjustments, and neck exercises to address not just the pain, but also range of motion and strength.

Reference:

Hoving JL, Koes BW, de Vet HCW, et al. Manual therapy, physical therapy, or continued care by a general practitioner for patients with neck pain. *Annals of Internal Medicine* 2002;136(10), pp. 713-722.

To read more about neck pain, go to <http://www.chiroweb.com/tyh/neckpain.html>.

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