

[IMAGE]

No Need to Fear Chiropractic

Hotly contested by health practitioners is whether chiropractic manipulations of the neck can increase risk for strokes, which occur when blood flow to the brain is blocked in a blood vessel because of a clot formed in an artery. Many claim these cervical chiropractic adjustments lead to strokes in patients after manipulation, while chiropractors and their patients are obviously concerned if there is any truth to these allegations.

A recent study in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* estimated the risk of stroke in a series of cases covered by the Canadian Chiropractic Protective Association (CCPA). The authors reviewed malpractice records to evaluate stroke claims following chiropractic treatments from 1988-1997. This number was compared to the total number of cervical manipulations performed yearly by chiropractors covered by the CCPA.

The odds that a patient will suffer a stroke after receiving cervical manipulation are one per 8 million office visits, or one per roughly 6 million cervical manipulations, according to this study. Twenty-three cases of stroke after chiropractic adjustment were on record; yet approximately 135 million cervical adjustments were carried out by 4,500 chiropractors over the 10-year period.

These data indicate that stroke is probably much less likely in chiropractic patients than has been estimated by neurologists (about one per 500,000-1 million). If you have any questions or concerns about stroke related to chiropractic, ask your chiropractor for more information.

Reference:

Haldeman S, Carey P, Townsend M, et al. Arterial dissections following cervical manipulation: The chiropractic experience. *Canadian Medical Association Journal* 2001;165(7), pp. 905-906.

For more background information on chiropractic, go to <http://www.chiroweb.com/find/whatis.html>.

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