

[IMAGE]

Lifetime Chiropractic

By Kevin M. Wong, DC

One of the most exciting aspects of being a chiropractor is helping people on a daily basis. I have been in practice now for more than 11 years, and I still get excited every morning when I go to work because I have so much fun working with my patients.

No doubt you have begun to experience the benefits of chiropractic. As your health care provider, we have the important job of making sure we listen to you, administer the proper care, and relieve your pain so you start to feel better again. Our goal is to help you perform as optimally as possible. This involves teamwork between the doctor and the patient. The chiropractor guides you in your healing while you, in turn, do your home care and perform any exercises they recommend.

Once your pain and discomfort are gone, it feels as if you have your life back again. You are able to go out and perform your everyday activities like exercising, playing golf or going places with your family. We, as chiropractors, are extremely pleased when our patients begin feeling better, and eventually they tell us they feel "normal" again. But our responsibility to you, the patient, does not end there.

In my practice, I start a relationship with my patients - one deeply rooted in trust and understanding - on the first day I meet them. I explain and educate them on their ailment, the treatment and what they are expected to do outside the office to help get them better. This expectation I have of patients taking care of themselves follows them throughout their lives, even after we have stopped active care.

image - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark As much as we hope our adjustments hold forever and our patients continue to feel better, the reality is that, inevitably, your body will need checkups every so often. Life circumstances often arise that can cause your spine and other joints of the body to become stressed and thrown back out of alignment.

Did you know you could benefit from regular spinal checkups - just like you benefit when a dentist cleans your teeth or a mechanic changes the oil in your car? Regular chiropractic maintenance can help you avoid major problems before they happen.

Lifestyle Stress

Lifestyle stress or injuries can happen to your body simply as a part of living your normal life. Think for a moment about your average daily activities. As you retrace your steps from the time you wake up until the time you go to bed, you can probably identify numerous tasks that potentially could cause stress on your body. There are so many different types of activities we perform during the course of a day, week or month. Here are a few of the most common scenarios I hear when a patient comes in seeking treatment.

If you are a parent of young children, your activities can include much of the following: bending over and using your arms to pick up, hold and carry your children; driving multiple times daily; pushing strollers; and changing diapers. Do you think any of these activities can put stress on the spine and other parts of the body?

How about those days when you are home and need to do the laundry, vacuum, mop the floors and straighten up around the house. Could any of these duties cause some wear and tear on your body? Let's not forget those of you who work clerical or desk jobs. You might spend much of your day sitting in meetings, typing on the computer, talking on the phone, filing papers or photocopying. Do any of these activities put stress on your body? Certainly these activities can all be stressful - especially over time.

Workout Stress

Even engaging in activities that are good for you, such as regular exercise or sports-related activities, can lead to stress on your body. Think of your average exercise workout. Run through it in your mind from start to finish and visualize what you are putting your body through. It can be as simple as going on the treadmill or elliptical machine, or as complex as intense weight training. It can involve a nice, slow stretching class or a high-intensity spinning class. Pilates/mat classes, yoga, balance ball, foam roller, or exercise ball: What's your cup of tea?

Now think about specific athletic events in which you still might engage. Is it basketball, tennis, golf, running, racquetball or softball? Whatever you prefer to play, do you think it could put a strain on your body? The answer, of course, is *yes it can!*

Why Can't Chiropractic Last Longer?

One of the questions patients ask me is, "Why can't you just put me back in alignment and have it stay that way? Why do I have to come back every so often?" The reason your chiropractic adjustments do not hold forever is because you go out and live your life. When you do the things we described earlier, your muscles, spine and joints react to the stress over time.

When you think about it, almost every single job or daily activity can have an effect on the alignment of your spine and extremities. Even though we encourage you to exercise to stay healthy, it can cause stress on your body that needs to be addressed. Your body reacts by moving out of alignment and your muscles spasm, which causes swelling, pain and discomfort to return. Does that mean you shouldn't exercise? No! Stress is a normal part of life. The point I want to make is that you can do something to keep it from negatively affecting your body and your health.

Some patients are able to hold their adjustments longer than others. Certain patients might only come in for an annual checkup because they exercise and do things that keep them strong. Other patients might come back every two weeks because their daily routine is so physically demanding that they are quickly thrown out of alignment. It all depends on your genetics, your commitment to your home exercises and your lifestyle. You and your chiropractor will be able to discover what your optimal frequency should be for coming back to the office for spinal tune-ups.

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