

[IMAGE]

Chiropractic: 42 Times Safer

By Editorial Staff

What's one of many important reasons to visit your doctor of chiropractic instead of a medical doctor if you're suffering from back pain? It's a whopping 42 times safer. Here's why: A new study compared the safety of seniors (65-84 years old) using spinal manipulative therapy (SMT) with those using opioid analgesic therapy (OAT) for chronic low back pain (cLBP). In reviewing five years of data, the study authors found that "the adjusted rate of ADE [adverse drug events] was more than 42 times higher for initial choice of OAT versus initial choice of SMT."

In reaching their conclusion, the research team "reviewed Medicare claims data spanning a 5-year period on fee-for-service beneficiaries aged 65 to 84 years, continuously enrolled under Medicare Parts A, B, and D for a 60-month study period, and with an episode of cLBP in 2013." Patients with a cancer diagnosis or history of hospice care were excluded from the analysis.

choose wisely - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark All patients received SMT or opioids long-term for their pain and were categorized into three comparative groups based on use: SMT only, OAT only or a combination of the two – patients who "crossed over," as the authors stated, at some point during their care, from spinal manipulative therapy to opioid use, or vice versa. Regardless of whether the patient crossed over from one therapy to the other, initial choice of spinal manipulative therapy vs. opioid therapy proved significantly safer in terms of adverse drug events.

This latest study, published in the research journal *Spine*, is important in that it quantifies just how dangerous opioids are for chronic low back pain compared to spinal manipulation. It is also important in that older adults are more likely to use opioids than younger patients; and are significantly more likely to engage in polypharmacy (use of multiple medications at the same time). Opioids represent just one more drug for an often already overburdened elderly patient. Simply put, chiropractic is a better, safer choice.

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