

[IMAGE]

Relieving Back Pain the Natural Way

Back pain is the leading reason people seek out the services of a doctor of chiropractic for care. While spinal adjustments are the most popular method chiropractors use to treat back pain, they are by no means the only method. A review published by The Cochrane Collaboration has found that three herbs - devil's claw, white willow bark and cayenne - also are effective in treating low back pain, and that in some instances, they work just as well as prescription drugs.

In the review, scientists examined 10 other studies involving more than 1,500 people who suffered from acute, subacute or chronic low back pain. The review showed "strong evidence" that a 60 milligram daily dose of devil's claw was more effective than a placebo in the relief of back pain, and appeared to reduce back pain as much as a 12.5-milligram dose of Vioxx, a painkiller that was recently taken off of the market due to a number of adverse side-effects. A 240 milligram daily dose of white willow bark also had the same effect as a 12.5 milligram dose of Vioxx. Cayenne, which was tested as a type of plaster applied to the skin, reduced pain more than a placebo, and was just as effective as Spiroflor, a popular homeopathic gel.

Of course, it's important to note that while these herbs appear to be effective in treating back pain, they are not entirely without some side-effects of their own, at least in certain circumstances. Devil's claw, for instance, may cause an upset stomach, while white willow bark can reduce the effectiveness of blood-thinning medications. As such, people who are taking blood thinners or are sensitive to certain herbs may want to seek out other natural forms of back pain relief – such as an adjustment from their chiropractor! For more information on what your chiropractor can do to help relieve back pain, visit www.chiroweb.com/find/tellmeabout/backpain.html.

Reference:

Gagnier JJ, van Tulder M, Berman B, et al. Herbal medicine for low back pain. *The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 2006, Issue 2. Article #CD004504. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD004504.pub3.

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