

[IMAGE]

A Neck Above the Rest

Neck pain afflicts almost three-quarters of adults at some point; for nearly one in six, pain is chronic. If you suffer from neck pain, many different forms of therapy are available, including spinal manipulation, drug regimens and exercises - but which form is best?

To compare the effectiveness of three forms of neck pain therapy, researchers followed approximately 200 people suffering from chronic neck pain over 11 weeks of treatment, and recorded their progress over the next two years. The patients were randomly divided to receive 20 one-hour treatments, in one of the methods listed below:

- spinal manipulation and light soft-tissue massage from experienced chiropractic clinicians;
- chiropractic spinal manipulation plus rehabilitative exercise from trained exercise therapists, including stretching and dynamic neck exercises; or
- rehabilitative neck exercises using a variable resistance, neck extension and rotation machine.

Patient-rated pain was lower for both exercise groups than for manipulation alone, and the exercise groups benefited more regarding pain, disability, improvement and health status. Spinal manipulation plus exercise provided greater satisfaction than manipulation alone or rehabilitative exercises, however. The advantage of both manipulation plus exercise and machine exercises over manipulation alone continued over the two-year follow-up period.

If you suffer from chronic neck pain and don't know where to turn, your local chiropractor is the best place to start. Cervical manipulations along with regular neck exercises can help end the pain and get you headed in the right direction.

Reference:

Evans R, Bronfort G, et al. Two-year follow-up of a randomized clinical trial of spinal manipulation and two types of exercise for patients with chronic neck pain. *Spine* 2002;27(21), pp. 2383-2389.

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

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