

[IMAGE]

Take a Crack at Chiropractic

The spine and adjacent tissues are pivotal in nearly all major bodily movements. So when back or neck pain strike the one-third of adults who suffer from one or both condition(s) every year, the impact can be enormous. In fact, back pain is the second most common reason people visit physicians in the U.S., with neck pain close behind.

Because of the blossoming use of complementary and alternative therapies, a study appearing recently in the journal *Spine* assessed the prevalence of use of different forms of therapy for back and neck pain. The national telephone survey of over 2,000 randomly selected Americans asked a series of questions on whether or not each respondent suffered from any forms of back or neck pain the previous year, and if so, what type of treatment he or she sought.

Chiropractic was the most-used complementary therapy in this study, with 20% of back or neck pain sufferers seeking chiropractic care; Overall, complementary medicine was used far more than conventional medicine (54% vs. 37%, respectively). Perhaps more importantly, chiropractic was considered more helpful than conventional medicine. Over 60% of sufferers considered chiropractic "very helpful" for treating back and neck pain, compared to 27% for conventional providers.

The authors of this study estimate that 628 million visits were made to complementary therapy providers in 1997, a number that increases every year, and that a third of these visits were specifically for back or neck pain. A multitude of studies have shown that chiropractic and other so-called alternative therapies, such as massage, are highly effective for musculoskeletal pain. Isn't it time you gave them a try?

Reference:

Wolsko PM, Eisenberg DM, et al. Patterns and perceptions of care for treatment of back and neck pain: Results of a national survey. *Spine* 2003;28(3), pp. 292-298.

For more studies on back and neck pain, check out <http://www.chiroweb.com/find/archives/musculoskeletal>.

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