

What is Chiropractic?

Chiropractic supports the concept that maintenance of proper function of the musculoskeletal and nervous systems can provide for better health. It is a form of health care that is drugless, non-invasive, and actively promotes health. Chiropractic care is holistic, meaning that the entire body and a person's lifestyle are examined and treated.

When a chiropractor works with a patient, the cause of the patient's physical problem is addressed and lifestyle factors that may affect the problem (such as diet, posture, exercise, and others) are modified to speed recovery and prevent recurrence.

What education is required to practice chiropractic?

Chiropractic graduates must have a minimum of six years of college education. Chiropractic education's foundation in the basic life sciences includes coursework in anatomy, biochemistry, microbiology, physical and laboratory diagnostics, radiology, physiology, pathology, nutrition, and public health. In addition, chiropractic education involves a detailed study of clinical sciences as well as clinical experience. In fact, chiropractic education is similar to medical and osteopathic education **except** that these practitioners emphasize surgery and pharmacology while Doctors of Chiropractic focus on the diagnosis of musculoskeletal and nervous system disorders and the treatment through clinically and scientifically established conservative procedures.

This education means that Doctors of Chiropractic have the expertise to diagnose, treat, and/or manage many different health problems. If diagnosis indicates that another type of care is more appropriate for you, a referral will be made.

What problems can be treated?

Most patients coming to a chiropractic office get treated for back pain. This pain may be in the lower (e.g. sciatica), mid, or upper back with or without radiation. About 10% of patients receive treatment for different types of headaches. Research has shown that chiropractic management of tension-type, cervicogenic and migraine headache is effective and safe.¹²³⁴⁵⁶ Spinal manipulation was recommended as a first line of treatment for acute low back pain by the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research, an arm of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.⁷

Chiropractic and Children

In general, people of any age can be treated by chiropractors. The treatment techniques are adapted to the patient, patient age and other specific circumstances.

Ear pain is the number one reason for child visits to chiropractors. A promising study indicates that there is a strong correlation between adjustments and the resolution of ear infections.⁸ Other concerns why parents bring children to chiropractors include colic, pain (mostly low back and neck pain), and falls.

What is an adjustment?

Chiropractic care is known (but not exclusively) for its use of the adjustment, sometimes called manipulation. An adjustment is a precise procedure in which the trained Doctor of Chiropractic exerts specific corrective pressure at specific places on your spine or other joints. When a thorough examination reveals joints that are not in proper function, adjustments are applied to correct joint alignment and/or mobility, this relieves associated muscle and nerve tension, improves balance and assists healing. In most cases, adjustments are performed manually or with a handheld instrument by the Doctor of Chiropractic.

Christian P. Schaefer
Doctor of Chiropractic
Palmer College of Chiropractic, USA
Doktor der Chiropraktik
Heilpraktiker
Eisenbahnstrasse 67
67655 Kaiserslautern

Tel: 0631 – 626 0 123
www.chiropraktik-kl.de
kontakt@chiropraktik-kl.de



What can I expect from treatment?

You will be asked to complete a health history, including past health problems, diet, exercise, occupation, and other information of importance. Examination may include palpation (examination by touch), x-rays, and range of motion, strength, neurological, orthopedic, or other tests.

Besides the adjustment, Doctors of Chiropractic may use other modalities such as electric muscle stimulation, ultrasound, moist heat, ice, massage, or others. Your chiropractor will also take the time to counsel you about the prevention of disease and the methods for living a healthy life. You may not receive an adjustment at every appointment. The treatment you receive will be designed specifically for you – based on your symptoms and examination findings.

Relieving the pain is the first goal of chiropractic treatment. The second objective is to correct and normalize spinal segmental relationships and thus relieve the resulting nerve, muscular, and vascular disturbance. A third goal is to prevent recurrence. Your progress under chiropractic care will be carefully monitored. The subjective improvement as well as the objective findings will be noted, and your treatment plan will be modified to meet your changing condition. Communication between your chiropractor and other health care providers will be encouraged for your benefit.

What information should I bring to my first visit?

- If you have already had tests (such as x-rays) regarding your problem, bring them and any reports to the Doctor of Chiropractic's office.
- Be prepared to discuss: when the problem started; how it started; how long you have had it; what makes the problem worse or better; treatments you have tried so far and how well they worked; and any other information you believe is relevant.
- Bring notes regarding comments or questions you want to ask the Doctor of Chiropractic.

Communication

Discussion and open communication about your health concerns are always encouraged. Please feel comfortable to address any of your concerns with the doctor or staff at any time – so that your goals and ours will combine to achieve maximum improvement in your health.

¹ Parker G et al. A controlled trial of cervical manipulation for migraine. Australian New Zealand Journal of Medicine. 1978; Vol. 8, pp. 589-593.

² Parker GB, et al. Why does migraine improve during a clinical trial? Further results from a trial of cervical manipulation for migraine. Australian New Zealand Journal of Medicine. 1980; Vol. 10, pp. 192-198.

³ Nelson CF, et al. The efficacy of spinal manipulation, amitriptyline and the combination of both therapies for the prophylaxis of migraine headache. Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics. 1998; Vol. 21, pp. 511-519.

⁴ Boline P, et al. Spinal Manipulation vs amitriptyline for the treatment of chronic tension-type headaches. Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics. 1995; Vol. 18, pp. 148-154.

⁵ Nilsson N, et al. The effect of spinal manipulation in the treatment of cervicogenic headache. Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics. 1997; Vol. 20, pp. 326-330.

⁶ McCrory DC, et al. Behavioral and Physical Treatments for Tension-type and Cervicogenic Headache. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Evidence-based Practice Center, 2001.

⁷ Bigos S, et al. Acute Low Back Pain in Adults. Clinical Practice Guideline No. 14, AHCPR Pub. No. 95-0642

⁸ Fallon JM. The Role of the Chiropractic Adjustment in the Care and Treatment of 332 Children with Otitis Media. Journal of Clinical Chiropractic Pediatrics. 1997; Vol. 2, No.2 pp. 167-183.