

# OPTIMAL HEALTH UNIVERSITY™

Presented by Dr. Troy H. Peters

## 10 Reasons Not to Miss Your Chiropractic Appointment

*Dr. Peters becomes concerned when patients miss their appointments because chiropractic care is — quite literally — a hands-on endeavor that requires full patient participation. The following are just 10 of the many reasons not to miss your chiropractic appointment:*



### 1 Chiropractic Is Prevention Oriented

Regularly scheduled chiropractic care is an integral part of the *chiropractic lifestyle* — a way of life that focuses on preventing illness and disease, not just masking symptoms with drugs.

When spinal bones (vertebrae) are misaligned, the result is a common condition known as *vertebral subluxation*. Left uncared for, these areas of misalignment can spark a wide range of disorders, from carpal tunnel syndrome to colic, back pain and migraine headaches.

You may know that Dr. Peters uses safe and gentle maneuvers known as *chiropractic adjustments* to restore spinal alignment. But did you know that this all-natural alternative to drugs and surgery also helps *prevent* injury and disease? That's because a healthy spine — where nerves are able to



function without obstruction from misaligned vertebrae — is less susceptible to injury.

### 2 Chiropractic Care Plans Are Not Arbitrary

Chiropractic is not a “cookie-cutter” approach to health care. Each patient receives a specifically designed therapeutic protocol. Patients with identical symptoms and diagnoses may require utterly different care due to age, pre-existing health conditions and other factors.

By missing your appointment, you are, in essence, questioning the care plan your doctor has outlined for you.

### 3 Chiropractic Is a Partnership

When health care is viewed as a partnership, it's better for the patient and doctor alike. Dr. Peters encourages patients to take an active role in their care by showing up for appointments, asking questions and doing their “homework” when assigned: such as exercises, nutritional modifications and stress reduction techniques.

### 4 Chiropractic Care Is Cumulative

Chiropractic care is cumulative. At each appointment, we make progress that builds on that obtained during the previous visit. Missing appointments breaks this continuum of care and can result in missing out on chiropractic's full therapeutic benefits.

### 5 Chiropractic May Boost Immune Function

One study indicates that chiropractic adjustments boost polymorphonuclear neutrophils (PMN) and monocytes — white blood cells associated with a healthy immune system (*J Manipulative Physiol Ther* 1991;7:399-408).

Chiropractic care may also help lower blood pressure by promoting stress reduction. Other studies link chiropractic care with a reduced risk of developing chronic pain, Parkinson's disease, infantile colic, ear infections, multiple sclerosis and fibromyalgia.

### 6 Chiropractic Quells Stress & Fear

In addition to keeping the spine in optimal condition, regular chiropractic care helps patients learn to manage stress and minimize its impact on the body. Stress causes muscles to tense, sparking — or worsening — vertebral subluxation.

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Anticipatory fear and anxiety — both about procedures and bad news — often prevent patients from keeping appointments, according to research from the University of Nebraska Medical Center (*Ann Fam Med* 2004;2:541-5).

Doctors of chiropractic ease fears by carefully and thoroughly explaining all procedures. This not only has a positive effect on appointment-keeping behavior, but it also promotes healing.

One study shows that 160 rodeo riders, fearless by nature (or default!), healed faster after a whiplash-inducing auto accident than did 140 similarly injured spectators.

“What we found is that rodeo athletes recover faster and miss less work,” says study author Dr. Robert Ferrari. “It may be that athletes are physically more fit ... or it may be that athletes have a different attitude toward injury and they think the best way to deal with it is to just keep going.” (*J Rheumatol* 2006;33:975-7.)

This study indicates that the less anxiety about chiropractic care, the more likely to recover faster. Keeping appointments helps dispel anxiety, squash fear and hasten healing.

## **7 Chiropractic Boosts Athletic Performance**

Professional athletes rely on chiropractic care to reach optimal performance capacity.

Chiropractic boosts athletic performance by strengthening the body’s entire musculoskeletal system. One analysis involving the U.S. National Football League (NFL) found that “a substantial majority of NFL trainers have developed cooperative relationships with chiropractors, with 77 percent having referred a player to a chiropractor. Thirty-one percent of NFL teams have a chiropractor officially on staff, and an additional 12 percent of teams refer players to chiropractors but do not directly retain these chiropractors.” (*J Manipulative Physiol Ther* 2002;25:E2.)

## **8 Chiropractic Fuels Cognitive Function**

Mapping of brain activity before and after chiropractic adjustments of the cervical spine reveals that chiropractic care stimulates cognitive function.

In a study involving 500 adult volunteers, researchers used cutting-edge technology to create maps of functioning in the cortical (exterior) portions of the brain before and after chiropractic adjustments of the cervical spine. Researchers found that “cervical manipulation activates specific neurological pathways” in the brain, potentially stimulating cognitive function (*J Manipulative Physiol Ther* 1997;20:529).

Cervical manipulation also enhances response mechanisms in the brain, according to researchers in New Zealand who conducted a study involving 30 volunteers: all with evidence of cervical spinal joint dysfunction. Instead of cortical mapping, the researchers used reaction time to various stimulation as a gauge.

“Multiple sites of cervical spinal joint dysfunction were related to impaired cortical processing,” noted the researchers. This was demonstrated by “significantly less accurate response selection and a trend toward more variable performance of an anticipated response.” (*J Manipulative Physiol Ther* 2005;28:502-7.) After chiropractic adjustment, the volunteers demonstrated improved cortical processing and response selection.

## **9 Chiropractic Enhances Work Performance**

Regular chiropractic care may boost work performance by warding off work-related injuries, including carpal tunnel syndrome and low-back pain.

For instance, chiropractic care defuses low-back pain (LBP) associated with sitting hour after hour in ergonomically incorrect chairs. “Sitting causes the pelvis to rotate backward and causes reduction in lumbar lordosis [the natural curve of the low back], trunk-thigh angle, and knee angle,” note researchers. It also causes “an

increase in muscle effort and disc pressure.” (*J Manipulative Physiol Ther* 1999;22:594-609.)

Unremitting LBP can lead to work absence and higher medical costs: the focus of a study published earlier this year.

In a review of 250 employees receiving worker’s compensation for LBP — 72 of whom had no physically therapeutic care — patients receiving spinal manipulation experienced greater reductions in pain and disability. This translated into lower therapeutic costs and a faster return to work (*Spine Journal* 2006;6:289-95).

Chiropractic care effectively restores proper spinal alignment and reduces low-back pain. Missing appointments, however, may foster a “one step forward, two steps back” scenario.

## **10 Keeping Your Appointments Is Respectful to Other Patients**

When you “skip” your appointment, without alerting us in advance, it’s disrespectful to everyone. Particularly because another patient may have to suffer an extra day because we were originally fully booked.

We certainly understand that emergencies arise, and advance notice isn’t always possible. But, more times than not, it is. Knowing about a cancellation in advance gives our office the opportunity to reassign and reschedule your appointment.

If you have any questions regarding our scheduling policy, please ask someone at the front desk. We look forward to seeing you at your next appointment!

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