

OPTIMAL HEALTH UNIVERSITY™

Presented by Dr. Troy H. Peters

Can Chiropractic Adjustments Improve Well-Being?

Doctors of chiropractic know that there's an intrinsic and inseparable connection between the body, the mind and the spirit. Dr. Peters wants you to know that chiropractic care goes way beyond merely optimizing spinal function. Research suggests that chiropractic may also improve emotional health, including psychological well-being.



Psychic Downer

Dr. Peters explains that, according to new research, a common malady known as *vertebral subluxation* may affect the psyche. Vertebral subluxation is linked to a wide range of physical health issues as well.

Vertebral subluxation is a condition in which spinal bones (vertebrae) have restricted mobility. It occurs when vertebrae are slightly out of place or not functioning properly. Chiropractors use specialized maneuvers, called *chiropractic adjustments*, to correct vertebral subluxations by restoring motion and spinal alignment.

Vertebral Subluxations Inhibit Well-Being

Multiple studies indicate that well-being may be directly tied to vertebral subluxations.

In one report, researchers used two different assessments to measure well-being in an individual with chronic low-back pain. The 26-year-old female patient had multiple vertebral subluxations and low scores on two quality-of-life outcome measurements.

After nine months of chiropractic care, her vertebral subluxations were significantly reduced. Simultaneously, her well-being also improved. In an evaluation called "The Quality of Well-Being Scale," her score jumped from 1.1 to 8.2 after chiropractic care. Another well-being survey, which initially indicated low scores, exceeded normal values for well-being on five subscales. The mental health composite score on this assessment improved dramatically from 25.3 to 62.8.

"The patient appeared to experience improvement in quality of life while showing signs suggestive of improved spinal function. The relationship between indicators of vertebral subluxation and quality of life deserves further investigation using a research design that allows for exploration of possible causal relationships," summarize the scientists (*J Manipulative Physiol Ther* 2005;28:136-42).

Chiropractic Lifestyle

Well-being is a key aspect of the *chiropractic lifestyle*: a conscious mode of living that Dr. Peters encourages

patients to embrace. It encompasses healthy choices for body and mind, including a nutritious diet, daily exercise, stress reduction, proper hydration and regular chiropractic care. Unlike medication with limited effectiveness, this lifestyle has proven positive long-term effects on well-being — all without side-effects.

When 205 volunteers attended a four-day health program, which mirrored principals of the chiropractic lifestyle, they enjoyed prolonged emotional benefit. The health retreat was designed to reduce vertebral subluxations, restore balance to the nervous system and provide lifestyle and nutritional education.

Patients completed a health survey and the Global Well-Being Scale just prior to the program, at its end — and then again eight weeks later. At the program's completion, all attendees showed "significant improvement" in the well-being assessment — and in six of eight scales on the health survey. Two months later, participants' scores for both tests remained higher than before the program (*J Vert Sublux Res* 2008;3:1-8).



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Complete Well-Being

Research shows that chiropractic care affects all aspects of emotional well-being.

For instance, 10 volunteers participated in a five and one-half month study. All participants held stressful positions as public safety personnel at a fire and emergency services department — jobs that taxed their emotional health. As part of the experiment, the participants received weekly chiropractic care.

Participants completed a thorough quality-of-life survey at the study's onset and at its completion. The comprehensive evaluation included assessment of physical and emotional well-being, mental and emotional state, stress management, life enjoyment and overall quality of life.

At the end of the study, subjects enjoyed remarkable spine-related improvements, such as improved range of motion, spinal balance, tendon reflexes and posture. Concurrently, participants noted dramatic increases in all aspects of well-being (*J Vert Sublux Res* 2007;1-7).



Depression

Vertebral subluxations may also be related to depression, speculate researchers.

In one report, a 46-year-old man sought chiropractic care during a third bout of depression. His depression medication caused multiple side-effects, such as dizziness, muscle weakness and insomnia. He suffered from neck and low-back pain, anxiety, fatigue and diminished appetite. His initial chiropractic exam revealed multiple vertebral subluxations.

The patient's doctor of chiropractic performed "specific chiropractic adjustments for the correction of vertebral subluxations." Throughout care, the patient routinely completed well-being assessments. As his care progressed, he enjoyed a "significant increase" in three well-respected quality-of-life scientific indicators.

The researchers concluded: "The progress that has been documented with this man suggests a connection between the correction of vertebral subluxations and increased wellness and quality of life." (*J Vert Sublux Res* 2008;4:1-7.)

Anxiety

Analysis shows that anxiety may also be linked to vertebral subluxations.

In one report, a 19-year-old female was diagnosed with General Anxiety Disorder (GAD). For two years, she suffered from symptoms such as dizziness, trembling, sweating, heart palpitations, sleep deprivation, poor concentration, depersonalization and headaches. She was taking medication, but her symptoms continued to escalate, resulting in multiple emergency room visits.

A chiropractic evaluation revealed multiple, chronic vertebral subluxations and altered spinal curves in her neck and midback. Her chiropractor focused on eliminating vertebral subluxations to restore proper nerve function. "Improvement was noted after the first adjustment, 50% reduction in anxiety, 30% reduction in headache symptoms, and increased mobility in neck."

Over a four-month course of care, the patient experienced a remarkable jump in well-being and quality of life. She successfully discontinued medication, and her anxiety level remained reduced by 80 percent.

The study authors conclude that "these improvements suggest positive changes in mental health function [and] may be associated with subluxation correction from the application of chiropractic care." (*J Vert Sublux Res* 2004;1.)

Long-Term Solution; Not a "Quick-Fix"

Unlike antidepressants and anti-anxiety drugs, chiropractic care and the chiropractic lifestyle is a long-term, all-natural approach to optimal well-being. Although medication may appear to be a "quick fix," drugs have potential side-effects. On the other hand, chiropractic care is a natural, highly effective solution to many health issues related to anxiety and depression, such as chronic pain. However, the chiropractic lifestyle is a lifelong commitment, and may take some time to spark drastic changes.

At the New Zealand School of Chiropractic training clinic, 89 patients rated their emotional health status initially and every eight weeks for five months after regular chiropractic care. Volunteers assessed health across four domains: emotional and mental state, stress, life enjoyment and physical health. A second survey ascertained quality of life. Participants noted changes in both areas after consistent chiropractic care.

The authors conclude that the chiropractic care provided "significant benefits" in well-being, not instantly, but over time. "Study data suggested that health/wellness may accrue with time under care." (*J Vert Sublux Res* 2008;3:1-9.)

We're Here to Help

Maintaining a positive sense of well-being is essential for physical and emotional health. However, with today's frenzied pace of life, that's more challenging than ever before. Let us help you achieve emotional and physical wellness. We're here to listen and help!

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