

## **SPINE & SPORTS: National Chiropractic Health Month**

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It's National Chiropractic Health Month, a campaign aimed to raise public awareness of the benefits of chiropractic health care and celebrate the many ways it helps people feel better and live healthier lives. The chiropractic model of care encourages cost-effective, safe approaches for the diagnosis and management of painful musculoskeletal conditions, especially back pain.

Since its inception in the United States in 1895, the chiropractic profession has spread worldwide and is the treatment choice for many people with back pain, sports-related conditions and other musculoskeletal ailments. Chiropractic has been deemed the safest primary mode of health care in the world. The main reasons are that chiropractors are doctors who are trained to diagnose, the care does not involve the use of drugs or surgery as a primary means of treatment, and the odds of serious adverse effects from treatment are nearly non-existent.

Studies show that most chiropractic patients are very satisfied with their care, and research demonstrates improved health outcomes without adding costs to the healthcare system when doctors of chiropractic are utilized. While chiropractic integration into medical facilities would enhance the quality and reduce costs of musculoskeletal care for everyone, its implementation still remains poor, so consumers are left on their own to find a chiropractor outside of their medical circle. Also, unlike the medical and physical therapy professions, chiropractic varies greatly in the way care is provided, presenting a broad assortment of treatment types, avenues, styles and belief systems, so that finding a chiropractor with a modern, evidence-guided skill set can be challenging.

The spine is a very complex hub and structural axis for your body. It houses and protects your spinal cord, and hosts a complexity of nerves that serve as the bioelectric highway connecting you to your environment, so it's no wonder that chiropractic treatment aimed at alleviating spine disorders makes so many people happy! Considering that lower back pain is the number one cause of disability worldwide, and both neck pain and headaches are close behind, it's worthwhile to consider a chiropractic checkup when pain interferes with work, activities or lifestyle. A thorough hands-on physical examination by a doctor of chiropractic might be revealing and lead you down the path towards better health.

To find a quality chiropractor, look for one who offers a variety of procedures, provides hands-on care and doesn't exclusively use gizmos to treat the spine, has training in different types of soft tissue therapy, and has advanced post graduate degrees or certifications. While the lay public might not know how to find evidence-based providers, DCs current on research and clinical care will never insist on taking spine X-rays to assess alignment, nor impose several months of frequent care that may be unnecessary. Modern, evidence-based and patient-centered DCs should work with MD providers and physical therapists, provide treatment and courses of care that are logical and rational, and ultimately benefit the bottom line, the patient.

Chiropractic is safe and effective care for musculoskeletal conditions, and has proven itself to be integral to our health-care system. Celebrate National Chiropractic Health month by seeking out a top notch doctor of chiropractic to ensure your optimal musculoskeletal wellbeing. From the challenges of fall sports to yard cleanup and carving pumpkins, October reminds us of the importance of taking care of our musculoskeletal health!

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