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Cervicogenic Headache Helped with Chiropractic According to Study

A scientific study published in the February 2010 issue of, The Spine Journal, from the North American Spine Society offered future evidence of how chiropractic helps headaches. The study was conducted at Western States Chiropractic College by the Dean of Research, Dr. Mitchell Haas, who is also a faculty member of that institution.

In this study a total of 80 participants who were suffering from a specific form of headaches, known as cervicogenic headache (CGH), were separated into different groups. These groups received either 8 or 16 visits consisting of either chiropractic care or massage. The researchers referred to the chiropractic care as "spinal manipulation" (SMT), and listed the massage as LT for light manipulation. In addition to these groups, an additional number of participants received no care at all and were used as a control group for comparison.

In the two groups that received chiropractic care, the procedures were described as " high velocity low amplitude spinal manipulation". Care was only rendered for either 8 visits or 16 visits. The results of this care was compared with participants who received a light massage on either 8 visits or 16 visits.

To grade the changes the researchers used a modified version of the Von Korff pain and disability scale, which is a standard scientific way of measuring pain and rating it on a scale from 10 to 100. The researchers also noted the number of headaches and the amount of medication that the participants took because of the headaches. Information was collected every 4 weeks for a period of 24 weeks.

The results showed a significant decrease in pain for the group that received chiropractic care over the group that did not receive any care at all. Both the groups that received chiropractic showed an approximate 50 percent decrease in the number of cervicogenic headaches as well as a decrease in severity.

The groups that received massage also showed improvement over the control group, but that improvement was significantly less than the group that received chiropractic care. The researchers wrote in their conclusion, "Clinically important differences between SMT (spinal manipulative therapy, aka chiropractic adjustments) and a control intervention were observed favoring SMT."



Ménière Disease Helped with Chiropractic - A Case Study

A case study published in the March 2010 issue of the scientific periodical, the Journal of Chiropractic Medicine, documented a case of a woman who was suffering with Ménière Disease and was helped with chiropractic.

According to the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, (NIDCD), Ménière Disease is, "an abnormality of the inner ear causing a host of symptoms, including vertigo or severe dizziness, tinnitus or a roaring sound in the ears, fluctuating hearing loss, and the sensation of pressure or pain in the affected ear. The disorder usually affects



only one ear and is a common cause of hearing loss. Named after French physician Prosper Ménière who first described the syndrome in 1861."

Both the NIDCD and the authors of this study note that Ménière Disease is characterized by a triad of symptoms including recurrent and spontaneous vertigo (dizziness), hearing loss, and tinnitus (ringing in the ears), and may also be accompanied by a sensation of fullness in the ears.

In this case study a 40-year-old woman came to the chiropractors office with a 2-month history of vertigo which made her feel like the room was spinning. Additionally she complained of left-sided hearing loss and tinnitus for 16 months. She described the tinnitus as a loud "ringing tone" mixed with a sensation of "swooshing" or a fullness in her left ear. In addition to these primary problems, the woman also reported that her symptoms included chronic, left-sided neck and TMJ pain, along with intermittent headaches.

Chiropractic care was initiated with the woman's visit frequency being 3 visits per week. After only 2 weeks of care, the woman's TMJ pain, headache frequency and intensity, and vertigo symptoms had improved, and her tinnitus had completely resolved. She also noted that her neck pain was greatly reduced and her neck motion was improved.

On a follow up three months after she began chiropractic care, the woman reported only 2 minor episodes of "light-headedness" which only lasted several minutes. Also impressive is that the woman reported that she did not need to use any prescription or over-the-counter medications during the entire course of her chiropractic care. The case study further reported that two and a half years later, the woman only experienced occasional symptoms of ear fullness or mild light-headedness (not severe enough to be classified as vertigo) about 2 to 3 times per year.

Child with Scoliosis, Migraines, Attention Deficit Disorder Helped with Chiropractic

A case study research article published on March 10, 2010 in the scientific periodical, the Journal of Pediatric, Maternal and Family Health, documented the improvement under chiropractic care of a young girl who was diagnosed with scoliosis, migraines, and attention deficit disorder.

This report documented the case of a 7-year-old girl, who was born with paralysis to the right side of the face due to a difficult birth. Because of this in her early years she wore a helmet to help reshape her head due to the deformity. In addition the little girl also suffered from attention deficit disorder, difficulty concentrating, vomiting, and light sensitivity from intense migraine headaches she was suffering from since the age of two.

A chiropractic examination was performed which included x-rays that showed a moderate scoliosis. It was determined that vertebral subluxations were present and a course of specific chiropractic adjustments were initiated.

After only a month of care a follow-up examination and x-rays were taken and progress was seen, especially in a reduction of the scoliosis curve noted on the first x-rays. According to the girl's mother, the ADD symptoms she was experiencing, mainly extreme impulsivity, showed improvement of roughly 30% up to this point. Additionally her migraine headaches were resolved as well.

It was also documented that after six months the child's mother elected to discontinue care, as her daughter seemed to be doing well. However, about two years later the mother brought her daughter back for care as her symptoms started to return. Re-initiating care again corrected the problems.



Five Year Old Boy with Urinary and Bowel Problems Helped with Chiropractic

From the March 2010 issue of the scientific publication, The Journal of Chiropractic Medicine comes a case study documenting the improvement with chiropractic of a 5-year-old boy with the primary symptoms of a complete lack of bowel and bladder control. The young boy in this case was born with spinal defects that caused nerve system problems, for which he underwent prior surgery.



The history as reported by the parents was that their son had never had voluntary control over his bowel and bladder function since birth. The boy wore absorbent underpants day and night, and his father was concerned about the implications of starting kindergarten without the ability to control either his bowel or bladder functions. The boy was able to run and play normally and had no other obvious complaints of pain.

Chiropractic care was initiated with a series of adjustments. According to the report, after 2 visits the boy began showing improved bladder and bowel control. After only 5 chiropractic visits, the young boy was able to control his bowel and bladder during the day and at night and was able to discontinue wearing absorbent underpants. Unfortunately, at this point the boy's mother lost her employment and discontinued his care.

The case noted that the boy continued to maintain his bowel and bladder control for another 6 months when he began to have some problems again. The boy's mother brought him back for chiropractic care. Within a short period of time the boy again started to show improvement and within 4 additional visits he was able to once again discontinue wearing absorbent underwear and wear normal underpants.

In his discussion of this case, the author of this study noted that there are several mechanisms that are related to either bowel or urinary control problems. One of these mechanisms is neurological in nature which would explain how chiropractic had an effect on this young boy's problems. In his conclusion, the author wrote, "For this patient, chiropractic care was successful in establishing satisfactory bladder and bowel control."

Unneeded, Riskier Spinal Fusion Surgery on Rise

The above headline comes from an April 6, 2010 MSNBC article reporting on an April 7, 2010 study in the Journal of the American Medical Association, (JAMA), showing that the number of expensive and risky spinal surgeries continue to rise in spite of the lack of benefit.

According to the MSNBC article the study shows that among Medicare patients costlier and more complex spinal fusion surgeries are being performed at an increased rate for a common lower back condition they note is caused by aging and arthritis.

The study showed that from 2002 to 2007 the rate of more complex spinal surgeries had increased 15-fold with a related increase in complications and deaths. Dr. Eugene Carragee of Stanford University Medical Center, who wrote an accompanying editorial in JAMA commented, "You have one kind of operation that could cost \$20,000 and another that could cost \$80,000 and there's not good evidence the expensive one is being used appropriately in the majority of cases."

Among some of the more pronounced results of the study was that the death rate from these procedures increases from 2.3% among patients having decompression alone to 5.6% among those having complex fusions. Lead author Dr. Richard Deyo of Oregon Health and Science University in Portland, stated, "All operations aren't the same and some seem to be associated with higher complication rates than others. It's not necessarily true that the more aggressive surgery is better, at least in terms of safety."



In a Business Week article Dr. Deyo offered some form of an explanation for the increase in complex procedures

by saying, "There are financial influences at play," he said. "You get paid more for complex procedures."

Dr. Charles Rosen, a spine surgeon at the University of California, Irvine, and founder of the Association for Medical Ethics commented in the MSNBC article, "Too much fusion surgery is done in this country and often for inappropriate reasons." Dr. Rosen also commented that while complex fusions are needed for some conditions, patients "should not hesitate to get a second opinion."

Preliminary Study Results Show Chiropractic Care Could Make Labor Easier

On April 8, 2010, from the New Zealand news outlet Voxy News, comes a report on the preliminary results of a study that shows chiropractic care makes it easier for pregnant women to deliver their babies. The current study is being conducted at the New Zealand College of Chiropractic in Mt. Wellington, New Zealand.



This study looks at how chiropractic care may influence pelvic floor muscle function in healthy women before and after childbirth, and in women suffering from pelvic floor dysfunction. Researcher Dr. Jenny Kruger and research director Dr. Heidi Haavik-Taylor are in charge of the study and are optimistic about the final results.

Dr. Kruger noted, "We are working with a number of pregnant women here in New Zealand and the University of Australia in Sydney, which is also involved in the study, is testing hundreds of women." She continued, "We are using state of the art 4D ultrasound to visualize the pelvic floor of women, pre and post chiropractic adjustments. We want to see whether spinal adjustments can alter the way the pelvic floor works."

This new study should add to the body of evidence for the benefits of chiropractic for pregnant women. On their website, the American Pregnancy Association describes chiropractic by saying, "Chiropractic care is health maintenance of the spinal column, discs, related nerves and bone geometry without drugs or surgery. It involves the art and science of adjusting misaligned joints of the body, especially of the spine, which reduces spinal nerve stress and therefore promotes health throughout the body." The association explained some reasons for seeking chiropractic while pregnant. "Establishing pelvic balance and alignment is another reason to obtain chiropractic care during pregnancy. When the pelvis is misaligned it may reduce the amount of room available for the developing baby. This restriction is called intrauterine

constraint. A misaligned pelvis may also make it difficult for the baby to get into the best possible position for delivery."