

New treatment for high blood pressure?

By Jacquelyn L. Nygren, D.C.

If you walk into a chiropractor's office, most likely you are there because you decided you had it with your headaches. As skeptical as you were, Joe down the road said his back pain improved after seeing the chiropractor for awhile, so you decided you would finally try it. You were hoping your chiropractor would tell you that he or she could help with the pain. What you didn't expect was that you could be gaining much more to your health than being pain-free.

A 2007 study done at the University of Chicago Hypertension Center showed that a specific adjustment to the first cervical vertebra significantly reduced blood pressure in patients with early stages of hypertension. The chiropractic treatment had



the effect of "not one, but two blood-pressure medications given in combination." as told by the study leader, George Bakris, MD to WebMD. Sound incredible? Here is the real kicker...most of these patients had no neck pain whatsoever!

Spinal misalignments can put pressure on the surrounding structures including the spinal cord, spinal nerves, and arteries. These misalignments are

called "subluxations." Major misalignments can cause irritation to the nerve endings in between the segments, resulting in pain. Smaller, more subtle, misalignments however only put pressure on spinal nerves or blood vessels, causing impairment in function, but not necessarily any pain. These subluxations can occur early in life and are often not detected until you walk into that chiropractor's office with complaints of pain.

By adjusting that specific segment, it takes the pressure off of the arteries, allowing blood pressure to return to normal. It can also take pressure off of the brain stem, the spinal cord, and spinal nerves, resulting in better function overall. Chiropractors have found that while chiropractic is not a cure-all (and not a substitute for proper diet and exercise) it can assure

you that your body is functioning as close to 100 percent as it is able to. So sure, your chiropractor is going to help you with some of your pain, but remember that correcting subluxations can do much more than help Joe's back pain. It can improve your life!

For more information about the study you can look it up in the Journal of Human Hypertension 2007; 21:347-352. Or you can read about it at WebMD.

Dr. Jacquelyn Nygren is the owner of New Branch Chiropractic & Health Center in Belmont Station, Pittsboro. She sees patients of all ages and for many conditions. You can find more information about New Branch and chiropractic in general at www.newbranchchiro.com

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