

What Is Chiropractic?



According to The Association of Chiropractic Colleges, "chiropractic is a health care discipline which emphasizes the inherent recuperative power of the body to heal itself without the use of drugs or surgery. The practice of chiropractic focuses on the relationship between structure (primarily the spine) and function (as coordinated by the nervous system) and how that relationship affects the preservation and restoration of health.

Origins

The "founding father" of chiropractic, Dr. D.D. Palmer, developed a theory that spinal misalignment caused nerve pressure or irritation which in turn caused various ailments. He realized that the structure and condition of the body influenced how the body functioned and its ability to heal itself, without the use of drugs or surgery.

This simple philosophy has healed people and has prevented unwanted injury and illness for over a century! But to fully understand the chiropractic perspective, one must learn a bit about the nervous system, or how our bodies are "wired."

Our wiring

The nervous system consists of the brain, spinal cord, and nerves. The brain is divided into sections and stores and receives an incredible amount of information. But this information needs a way to get in and out. Nerves provide a pathway for this information to travel. The nerves exit from the base of the skull and the from the spinal column between the vertebrae. All of the cells, organs and tissues in the body receive messages from these nerves. If there is spinal misalignment, the function of the nerves can be compromised.

Nerve dysfunction can result from any number of factors, such as falls, accidents, stress, tension, or over-use. These events can alter our "wiring" and create pain or discomfort in our bodies.

Getting to the source

Doctors of chiropractic are trained to locate the source of the pain or discomfort— it may actually be far from the actual location where the symptom is occurring— and then we correct or adjust the joints in the body and set it up to heal on its own.

Of course, the type of correction or adjustment employed by the chiropractor depends on the condition being treated, but you get the main idea. The important thing to remember is that chiropractic success occurs by addressing the source of the problem, not just masking the symptoms.

When the joints of the body are not moving correctly, and causing nerve dysfunction, this is called a subluxation. Chiropractic involves the correction of the subluxation through a specialized technique called an adjustment. During an adjustment, the chiropractor uses his or her hands to deliver a precise, safe and controlled amount of force into the joints that are not moving correctly in order to restore mobility to the joint and reduce the interference to the exiting nerve.

Holistic efficiency

Because helping the body heal itself involves many facets, chiropractors also provide lifestyle advice to help prevent illness and injury. Diet & nutrition, fitness, ergonomics, and other areas in your life contribute, or diminish, your overall health. By making the right choices, one can live a life full of wellness and vitality.

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