



# Wellness News Network™

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## Low Back Pain and Chiropractic Care - Effective and Safe!

Presented by:

### Introduction

Chiropractors have always known that correcting the problem is more effective than masking the pain. Science has now caught up with chiropractic!

Low back pain commonly affects 8 out of 10 American adults and it is a condition that often seems to improve with care such as stretching, using ice or heat and taking pain or anti-inflammatory medications. However, low back pain is often more difficult than it seems, either returning with increased frequency and severity over time, or just lingering and becoming a chronic issue lasting months or years. Low-back pain can be debilitating and causes a total annual cost exceeding \$100 billion in lost wages and reduced productivity in the United States.

### Research<sup>1</sup>

Spinal adjustments for low-back pain is



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now showing to be one of the most effective ways to resolve back pain with less risk of re-injury over time!



In **2007**, the American College of Physicians and the American Pain Society included spinal adjustments as one of several options to consider when low-back pain does not improve with self-care.

In **2010**, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) report noted that “*complementary health therapies, including spinal manipulation, offer additional options to conventional treatments, which often have limited benefit in managing back and neck pain,*” and that spinal manipulation was more effective than placebo and equally or more effective than medication in reducing low-back

**QUESTION:**  
What can you do to temporarily relieve low back pain?

- A) ice and heat
- B) stretching
- C) pain medication
- D) all of the above

**ANSWER:**  
D) all of the above

**True or False?**  
Studies have concluded that chiropractic care is not as effective as other interventions

**ANSWER:**  
False – it is as effective or more effective

**QUESTION:**  
A 2011 clinical review noted spinal manipulation for chronic low back pain has been effective for up to...

- A) 12 months
- B) 18 months
- C) 6 months

**ANSWER:**  
B) 18 months

pain intensity.

A **2010** review looked at various manual therapies, such as spinal manipulation and massage, for a range of conditions and found strong evidence that spinal manipulation is effective for chronic low-back pain and moderate evidence of its effectiveness for acute low-back pain.

A **2011** review of 26 clinical trials looked at the effectiveness of different treatments, including spinal manipulation, for chronic low-back pain. The authors concluded that spinal manipulation is as effective as other interventions for reducing pain and improving function.

Researchers are now investigating whether the effects of spinal manipulation depend on the length and frequency of treatment.

In one study, funded by the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) that examined long-term effects in more than 600 people with low-back pain, results suggested that chiropractic care involving spinal manipulation was *as* or *more effective* as conventional medical care for up to 18 months.

Researchers are also exploring how spinal manipulation affects the body. In an NCCAM-funded study, of a small group of people with low-back pain, spinal manipulation affected pain perception in specific ways that other therapies (stationary bicycle and low-back extension exercises) did not.

## Managing Low-Back Pain

A review of evidence-based clinical guidelines for managing low-back pain resulted in these recommendations for primary care physicians:

- **Acute low back pain:** Patients with this condition may improve on their own and usually should remain active, learn about back pain and self-care options and consider non-drug therapies, including spinal manipulation, especially if the pain persists longer than 4 weeks.

- **Chronic low back pain:** Long-term use of opioid drugs usually does NOT improve functioning for patients with chronic low-back pain. Chronic low back pain patients may benefit from non-drug therapies, including spinal manipulation. Most chronic low back pain patients will not become pain free; a realistic outlook focuses on improving function in addition to reducing pain.

The goal of chiropractic treatment is to relieve pain and improve physical function. Please share this information with those who have low back pain and who have never tried chiropractic!



### Quote to Inspire

*“Much of your pain is the bitter potion by which the physician within you heals your sick self”*

*- Kahlil Gibran*

### References and Sources:

1. National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine <http://nccam.nih.gov/health/pain/spinemanipulation.htm>

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