

THE CHIROPRACTIC ADJUSTMENT



Chiropractic manipulative therapy (also known as the "chiropractic adjustment") is used to treat segmental dysfunction/subluxation of the spine and extremities.

Chiropractic manipulative therapy can increase joint mobility, relieve pain, and improve muscle strength and coordination. It may also have beneficial effects on activities regulated by the nervous system, such as circulation, immunity, and digestion.

Manipulation involves the application of a specific force or thrust against a bone, by hand or with an instrument. The applied force creates movement of the bone, which stimulates nerves within the muscles and ligaments attached to the bone and produces both localized and widespread effects on nervous system activity.

Studies have shown that adequate joint motion is essential for the proper healing of damaged muscles, ligaments and discs, and may help prevent repetitive injuries that lead to degenerative joint disease, or osteoarthritis.

The chiropractic adjustment may be carefully and gently delivered to extremity or spinal bones where restricted joint motion is detected. Muscle tension may initiate the onset of this restricted motion. Degenerative and inflammatory processes may also contribute to the development of joint motion restrictions.

The chiropractic physician makes the determination as to what areas may benefit from the chiropractic adjustment by performing a thorough examination, which includes an assessment of nervous system function and joint range of motion. Other diagnostic procedures (e.g. x-ray, CT scan, MRI) may be recommended.

There are many manipulation techniques that may be utilized, based upon the particular condition and patient. Certain techniques may produce a "popping" sound, which is believed to result from gas bubble expansion within the joint space. Manipulation of the joint in this manner may help promote optimum healing by preventing the development of adhesions within the joint, which can further restrict joint movement.

The chiropractic adjustment may be more effective when used in conjunction with soft tissue massage, physical therapy modalities, nutritional supplementation, strengthening and stretching exercises, stress management, and the application of ergonomic principles while performing activities of daily living. The frequency and duration of chiropractic care needed depends upon the particular patient and health disorder. Some conditions respond quickly to chiropractic care, while other conditions can take weeks or months to improve. Even with proper care, healing takes time.