

Chiropractic Wellness Center of Macomb Email Practice Member Newsletter

This newsletter is provided courtesy of Karl R.O.S. Johnson, D.C., L.C.P. (hon.)

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CHIROPRACTIC

Making Life Better, One
Spine at a Time.

Pinched Nerves...Hotter Than a Mid-Summer's Day in July.

That's how hot a pinched nerve can feel! Everyone has heard the old adage "Stuck between a rock and a hard place". Well that can literally be the case when it comes to a nerve being pinched by what chiropractors call a subluxation. Subluxations are misalignments of vertebrae that can cause less than optimal function of your spine and produce mechanical stress on the adjacent structures.

A pinched nerve can occur when your vertebrae are misaligned and pressure is placed on what are called nerve roots - the first part of the nerve as it exits from the spine. One problem that can occur from this condition is that the involved nerve swells and tries to occupy space that is already too small for it to pass through. The irritated nerve swells and inflames thus becoming the dreaded "hot nerve". Imagine having your finger stuck in a vise for long period of time. Even if you removed the pressure it would take a while for the associated pain and swelling to go down.

Doctors of Chiropractic specialize in the treatment of so called "pinched nerves". In many cases a series of adjustments can remove the pressure and allow the involved nerve the time it needs for the swelling to go down and return to health.

Some of the signs of a pinched nerve are pain, numbness, tingling and in advanced cases a loss of use of the muscles that are supplied by the nerve.

If you think that you may have a pinched nerve, don't wait! Schedule an appointment and get to see your chiropractor immediately to find out exactly what can be done to correct the problem and get you back on the road to optimal health.

Is the sound that I hear when I get adjusted the same as the sound that I hear when I crack my knuckles? Does it cause arthritis?

First, the "popping" sound that you hear when your chiropractor performs an adjustment is the same sound that you hear when you "crack" your knuckles. This sound is due to the release of pressure from gases that form in your joints. This sound is called an "audible" of the adjustment. Some authorities believe that the sound comes from the surfaces of adjacent structures moving across one another. Either way, it is just a sound that occurs and does not indicate either the success or failure of an adjustment. With regard to cracking your knuckles or getting adjusted causing arthritis, there is no evidence that this is true.

What is Maintenance Care?

For as long as mankind has had the intelligence to recognize that life is a commodity, the search has been on to find that ever-elusive "Fountain of Youth." This endless quest for optimal health and well-being has turned into a billion dollar a year industry that thrives on the sale of tonics and elixirs, fad diets, cosmetic surgery and the like. But what is this thing called "health"? It must be more than just the absence of disease. Health must be viewed as an ever-evolving state, a process that starts at birth and ends at death. It is the way that we manage our health and attempt to keep our body's functioning optimally that gives credence to what chiropractor's call, "Maintenance."

It is not necessary to get to the point where a problem develops to look for ways to improve and maintain your health. Your spine is the conduit or channel that your spinal cord passes through on its way to providing your body with life's essential flow of nerve energy. Misalignments of the spine can cause an improper flow of this energy and cause undetected and subtle changes in life's essential energy transmission. If the spinal balance is restored and then maintained, problems can be avoided all together.

A chiropractor is trained to correct subluxations of the spine through a process known as the chiropractic adjustment. Often after an adjustment, immediate relief can be experienced. However, if the underlying imbalance has been there for quite some time, it can sometimes take longer.

The question then arises, "Why, once I'm adjusted, do I have to keep getting adjusted?" To answer this, here is an analogy: When a person's teeth are crooked they get braces. After the teeth have straightened out, the orthodontist puts in a retainer. The reason that the retainer is used when the teeth are already straight is because the canals that surround the teeth are still crooked. It takes time for these retaining elements (the tooth canals) to straighten out.

The spine also has retaining elements. In the spine however, these are not canals but are muscles, ligaments and tendons. When proper mobility and balance is restored to the vertebrae, it must now be retained so that the muscles, ligaments and tendons can compensate themselves back to normal. Because of incorrect posture and uneven muscle use, these retaining elements are usually also out of balance and may take longer than the vertebral joints to return to normal. Often after spinal balance has been maintained for long enough, a Doctor of Chiropractic will give home techniques and possibly exercises to help to maintain the balance of the retaining elements. It makes good sense to keep the spine maintained instead of allowing it to degenerate to the point of diminished health.

So, even if you are feeling fine, undetected spinal problem may be having a detrimental effect on your health. See your chiropractor today and enjoy the sense of well-being that comes from knowing that you have taken the appropriate steps toward optimal health.

ChiroFact of the Month

Did you know that most people have 24 ribs but that occasionally people are born with ribs in the cervical and/or lumber spine? Doctors of Chiropractic are trained to determine if an extra rib exists and if it is causing a problem.

To make your appointment with Dr. Johnson call
810.731.8840 or 810.726-KIDS

NEWS YOU CAN USE TO SAFEGUARD YOUR HEALTH

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In The Interest of Safeguarding Your Health,

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Doctors Ignore Antibiotic Warnings

After 20 years of imploring physicians to prescribe antibiotics judiciously, the Alliance for the Prudent Use of Antibiotics (APUA) reports that doctors have not changed their prescription habits measurably. Experts are now trying to formulate a new plan to try to stem the proliferation of antibiotic-resistant bacteria that has many health officials scared half to death. The key, said leaders at a recent conference sponsored by the American Society for Microbiology, is for doctors to take the initiative in educating patients to the concept that an antibiotic is not the answer for every ailment that might involve an infection.¹ It seems, though, that if that hasn't happened by now, it isn't likely to happen in the near future.

Experts are also trying to find a way to make doctors realize that antibiotics are ineffective against viral infections such as the common cold. For those who already understand that concept, they want doctors to stop falsely portraying antibiotics as a cure in those cases to patients.

1. United Press, September 26, 1999.

Aerosol Headaches

A British study of 14,000 pregnant women² reports that those using some kind of aerosol product (such as air fresheners) on a regular basis experienced 25 percent more headaches than those who used them rarely. Aerosols were also linked to a 19 percent

increase in depression. Infants exposed to the products had 30 percent more ear infections and a 22 percent higher rate of diarrhea. Researchers blame compounds such as xylene, ketones and aldehydes for the effect.

2. *New Scientist*, September 1, 1999.

Walk For Heart Health

A new study published in *The New England Journal of Medicine*³ concludes that women can decrease their risk of heart disease by one third by regularly taking a brisk walk. The best results were seen in women who walked at a pace of at least 3 mph for a 30 minute time period, for a total workout of one to three hours per week. On average, the more time and energy put into the workout, the fewer cardiovascular incidents were noted. Other types of regular exercise showed similar, though not as consistent, results. The cardiovascular benefits of exercise appear even if the patient begins a workout program late in life.

3. *NEJM*, August 26, 1999.

Blueberries for Youthful Vigor

A new study of rat neurophysiology concludes that something about blueberries is very good for the nervous system. Geriatric rats fed the equivalent of a cup of blueberries per day became smarter and better coordinated than a control group. Communication between neurons was one of the benefits of the fruit, which led to improved learning. It also made a marked improvement in motor skills, as exhibited by the blueberry-fed rats on a test comparable to "lumberjack log rolling." They were able to stay on the "log" an average of ten seconds compared to the control group's average of six.⁴ The researchers are working to pinpoint the exact mechanism producing these results, but in the meantime have started eating blueberries themselves.

4. *Neuroscience*, September 1999.

Flea Collars

Research from Mississippi State University⁵ suggests that animals that wear flea collars might be transferring organophosphates to their owners. Five minutes of petting the animals, researchers say, is enough to produce measurable amounts of the chemicals on

human hands. Researchers do not yet know how much is actually absorbed by the body; a new study is now looking at this question. In the meantime, they recommend against letting children sleep with or hug pets that are wearing fresh flea collars or that have recently had a flea dip.

5. Led by toxicologist Janic Chambers, reported to the New Orleans meeting of the American Chemical Society, August 22, 1999.

How to Be More Attractive - to Mosquitoes

University of Florida researchers are delving into factors affecting mosquito motivations. Mosquitoes are apparently quite selective when feeding time comes. Breath odor is one of the biggest clues a mosquito uses to decide if a mammal will offer a suitable meal. The researchers say that mosquitoes can sniff out human breath rich in cholesterol and B-vitamin metabolites (substances they can't manufacture on their own) from as far away as 40 miles, zigzagging across the scent trail until they find their target.

Sweat is also an attractant, but only after bacteria have started metabolizing it, which is why a just-bathed body is often ignored by mosquitoes for a period of time. Be aware, though, that some skin care products are particularly appealing to the little bloodsuckers.⁶

6. Reuters, reporting on the work of entomologist Jerry Butler.

Botulism for Migraines

A plastic surgeon, using small amounts of botulism toxin to smooth out the forehead wrinkles in his patients, found an interesting side effect: a dramatic reduction in migraine headaches. Among a group of 96 migraine sufferers, half reported a complete cessation of the headaches for three to four months after administration of the toxin. Another 27 percent of the patients said the frequency of attacks was cut in half. Why it works is a complete mystery, though a clue might lie in its paralyzing action, currently used to stop muscle tremors.⁷

7. Reported by Dr. Daniel Null of the LSU Medical School's department of otolaryngology at a medical conference in New Orleans, September 28, 1999.

Nose Blowing Worsens Upper Respiratory Infections?

A group from the University of Virginia and the University of Aarhus in Denmark reports that blowing one's nose might actually lead to a prolongation of a cold or the development of a sinus infection. After introducing a CT-sensitive dye into the nose, they found that volunteers who blew their noses also blew dye and mucus back into the sinus cavities. However, coughing and sneezing did not produce this same effect. Adults blow their nose an average of 45 times each day during the first three days of a cold.⁸

8. Dr. Owen Hendley of the University of Virginia, September 28, 1999, reporting to the American Society of Microbiology conference in San Francisco.

Infectious Fingernails

Researchers from the University of Michigan Health System in Ann Arbor report that virulent bacteria appear quite frequently on nurses' fingernails, especially artificial ones. They found that many bacteria - including a deadly strain of *Staphylococcus aureus* - were not removed from artificial fingernails by routine hand washing, or even with use of an alcohol-based gel. They recommend a ban on artificial nails for hospital workers.⁹

9. United Press, reporting on the work of Dr. Shelly McNeil et al., September 28, 1999.

Another Effect of Smoking

New research suggests that smoking is related to yet another undesirable condition: lessened sexual satisfaction. A survey of nearly 300 men between the ages of 24 and 36 found that smokers experienced sex only about half as frequently as non-smokers. Not only was quantity reduced among smokers, but also quality: on a scale of one to 10, smokers rated their enjoyment a "5" compared to the non-smokers' "9."¹⁰ The study does not, however, definitively answer the question of whether smoking is the cause or merely a type of compensatory behavior.

10. Panayiotis Zavos of the American Institute of Andrology, Lexington, KY, reported by United Press, September, 1999.

Hot Tub for Diabetes

A very small study published in *The New England Journal of Medicine*¹¹ reports that a daily 30-minute soak in a hot tub may benefit diabetes sufferers. After a three-week period, a blood sugar level reduction of 13 percent was noted. One volunteer is reported to have had to cut back his insulin dose by 18 percent to keep his blood sugar level from

going too low. The research was prompted by a physician trying to find a way to reduce blood sugar levels of type II diabetics who were unable to exercise.

11. *NEJM*, September 26, 1999.

Pain Sensitivity

Another study¹² concludes that newborns exposed to painful experiences tend to be less tolerant of pain as they grow older. Early interventions such as circumcision or blood drawings lead to an increased anxiety about pain when they grow up, according to this analysis of research papers. Researchers think that early painful experiences somehow "prime" the nervous system. Circumcision is a major concern to some, as for some reason many doctors do not believe it can be painful to an infant. Also at high risk for this pain sensitization are infants born prematurely or very ill, who are subjected to an average of 700 hospital procedures during their stay.¹³

12. *Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics*, August 13, 1999.

13. United Press, August 13, 1999.