

The Wellness Express™



Jump on the train to good health

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What to Expect From Chiropractic Care

Presented by:

Introduction

Your chiropractor will do everything within his or her power to resolve your specific health problem as quickly as possible and with as few treatments as necessary. It is important to remember that every patient enters the chiropractic clinic with a different set of experiences, health concerns and expectations about how quickly they will recover and the necessary actions or steps required to achieve recovery. Your treatment and recovery expectations can affect how quickly you heal and how you feel about the treatment you are receiving. Your chiropractor will counsel you on appropriate treatment expectations for your unique health problem so that you get the most out of your chiropractic experience.

Setting Expectations for Recovery

Setting reasonable and realistic expectations for your recovery is an important consideration before you begin chiropractic care. Though many people report to the chiropractor only after pain or functional limitations surface, the underlying factors causing their problem may stem from actions or inactions - poor posture, repetitive injurious movements, and old, unresolved health issues - that cause unfavorable structural changes over

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time. Because these changes happen slowly, over time, it is only reasonable to think that your recovery may take some time, too.

Maintaining an optimistic outlook about your recovery, however, is equally important as setting realistic expectations. According to a 2008 study published in the *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, patients with acute low back pain who had a more positive expectation for recovery experienced greater functional improvement following care.¹



A Reasonable Time-frame for Improvement

Many patients who receive chiropractic care experience some degree of relief immediately after the adjustment or therapy. In most cases, improve

Exercise of the Week

Back Hyperextension on Exercise Ball, Arms Fully Extended

(Consult your chiropractor before engaging in this or any other exercise.)

Difficulty: High

Lie on ball face down with feet on floor, legs straight. Feet together or apart (feet apart is easier). Back is in a straight position. Hands positioned to side, palms forward and thumbs up.

The exercise: use low back muscles to bring body into a hyperextension position, shoulders back. Reach fingertips as far back toward feet as possible, keeping arms straight, palms out and thumbs up. Hold for 1-2 counts.

Repeat 5-10 repetitions.



ment happens over time with chiropractic care, with health gains coming quickly or gradually based on the frequency of your care, your specific health problem and your willingness to participate in home care activities prescribed by your chiropractor. Many chiropractors find that treating injuries early and often leads to a quicker resolution of the problem, fewer overall visits and a reduced likelihood of the problem happening again. The Spine Health website notes that a common chiropractic treatment plan consists of 3 visits per week for 2 to 4 weeks, followed by a re-evaluation of your condition.² Where you and your chiropractor choose to go from here depends on the degree of improvement noted.

Post-Adjustment Sensations or Experiences



If you have never experienced chiropractic care, it is important to understand what to expect during and after your treatment. When your chiropractor performs a spinal or extremity adjustment, it is common to hear an audible “pop.” This sound, known as a joint cavitation, is not the cracking of bones but results instead from a change in gas pressure within your joint (much like the pressure change that occurs when you open a carbonated drink).

The chiropractic adjustment itself is not painful, though the adjustment may

move joint structures that have not moved in some time and after the adjustment, it is common to feel a mild soreness in the area that has been treated. This feeling is similar to that of engaging in strenuous activity after a prolonged period of little or no physical activity. The Mayo Clinic states that chiropractic adjustments are safe when performed by licensed chiropractors but that some people may experience headache and fatigue for a few days after receiving chiropractic care.³

Possible Recovery Obstacles or Barriers

Some patients may experience obstacles or barriers to recovery that require further investigation by the treating chiropractor. If your symptoms do not improve within a reasonable timeframe (usually about 4 weeks) your chiropractor may order additional tests - blood work, imaging studies - to check for a complicating problem or condition. In some cases, repeated ergonomic stress that you experience at work or at home may cause continued pain or discomfort until it is addressed.

According to a 2010 study published in the journal *Chiropractic & Osteopathy*, some barriers to early improvement during chiropractic care (especially for enduring low back pain) include patient depression and anxiety - common problems in people who have experience chronic low back pain. Other patients may experience delayed recovery due to the concern about the possibility of re-injury by performing certain activities of daily living.⁴ Your chiropractor can talk with you about your concerns and offer you helpful advice about how to overcome any anxiety you may feel about your condition and recovery.

Disclaimer: Information contained in the Wellness Express™ newsletter is for educational and general purposes only and is designed to assist you in making informed decisions about your health. Any information contained herein is not intended to substitute advice from your physician or other healthcare professional.

Quote to Inspire

“The wish for healing has always been half of health”

Lucius Annaeus Seneca

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