

# Back Pain!

Although chiropractors treat more than back pain, many patients visit chiropractors looking for relief from this pervasive condition. In fact, 31 million Americans experience low-back pain at any given time.

## Interesting Facts

- Half of all working Americans report having back pain each year.
- Back pain is one of the most common reasons for missed work. In fact, back pain is the second most common reason for doctors' visits, outnumbered only by upper-respiratory infections.
- Most back-pain cases are mechanical or non-organic in nature—not caused by serious conditions such as inflammatory arthritis, infection, fracture, or cancer.
- Americans spend \$50 billion per year on back pain—and that's just for the more easily identified costs.
- Experts estimate that 80% of the population will experience a back problem during their life.

## Causes

The back is a complicated structure of bones, joints, ligaments, and muscles. One can sprain ligaments, strain muscles, rupture discs, and irritate joints, all of which can lead to back pain. While sports injuries and accidents can cause back pain, sometimes the simplest movements—for example, picking up a pencil from the floor— can have painful results. In addition, arthritis, poor posture, obesity, and psychological stress can cause or complicate back pain. Back pain can also directly result from internal-organ disease, such as kidney stones, kidney infections, blood clots, or bone loss.

## Manipulation As Treatment

Used primarily by Doctors of Chiropractic, manipulation has been largely ignored by most other health-care providers until recently. Today, with growing emphasis on treatment and cost effectiveness, manipulation is receiving more widespread attention.

Chiropractic spinal manipulation is a safe and effective treatment. It reduces pain, decreases medication use, rapidly advances rehabilitation, and requires very few passive treatments, such as bed rest.

In fact, after an extensive study of all currently available treatment options for low-back pain, the federal government's Agency for Health Care Policy and Research recommended that low-back pain sufferers choose the most conservative care first. It recommended spinal manipulation as the only safe, effective, and drugless form of initial professional treatment for acute low-back problems in adults.

## Prevention

- Maintain a healthy diet and weight.
- Remain active—movement nourishes discs and joints.
- Avoid prolonged inactivity.
- Warm up or stretch before physical activities.
- Maintain proper posture and be sure that your computer workstation is ergonomically correct.
- Wear comfortable, low-heeled shoes.
- Sleep on a medium-firm mattress to minimize any curve in your spine.
- Lift with your knees; keep the object close to your body; and do not twist when lifting.
- Quit smoking. Smoking impairs blood flow, resulting in oxygen and nutrient deprivation to spinal tissues.

If you or someone you know is suffering from back pain and have not found the relief for which you are looking, please call our office. We may be able to help!

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