

# Chiropractic and your health

Welcome to the amazing world of Chiropractic and your body. This booklet will provide you with a brief explanation on how your body works and why Chiropractic is so important to your health

**BRADFORD**HOUSE  
CHIROPRACTIC & WELLNESS CENTRE



## What is Chiropractic?

Chiropractic is a natural way of improving spinal health so that the nervous system can do its job of running the body and providing you with the energy you need to get the most out of life.

## What do Chiropractors do?

Chiropractors use their hands to locate joints in the spine or extremities that are not moving properly. They use a quick impulse to free the joint so that it moves correctly. This is called an adjustment. The muscles can then start to work normally and the spine or extremity joint will gradually return to its optimal working condition. Chiropractors are trained in different manipulative techniques and some use other therapies to help reduce pain and inflammation and promote tissue healing. These can include and are not limited to: Ultrasound, Electrotherapy, Dry Needling (Western acupuncture), Shockwave, Low Level Laser etc.

## Why should I see a Chiropractor?

The question should be: "Why do I keep on hurting myself?" Have a look at the iceberg.

Pain is a signal that something is wrong. Often we take painkillers but that just masks what is going on. Chiropractors help to deal with the cause of the problem.





Think of it another way - if a smoke alarm went off but you couldn't see the smoke or the fire, would you take the battery out to stop the alarm?

### **Do you only adjust backs?**

We adjust all the joints in the body. However, the spine is a special area as it contains a large part of the nervous system.

### **Is Chiropractic suitable for any age?**

Yes, Chiropractic can be for the whole family, no matter how young or old.

### **Do you only treat back problems?**

No, we adjust all the joints in the body. However, the spine is a special area as it contains a large part of the nervous system.

### **What happens on your initial appointment?**

On your first visit your Chiropractor will ask you about your complaint as well as your medical and health history.

### **What should I expect on the second appointment?**

The second visit is the Report of Findings. All of the information that you gave the Chiropractor at your first visit will have been carefully assessed and you will be told what has been found. You will get to see your X-rays or scans and the reports if any

were taken. Your treatment plan will be discussed with you and, if you agree, you will then have your first treatment. All treatments are specific to you and are tailored to your needs.

## Why do I need more than one treatment?

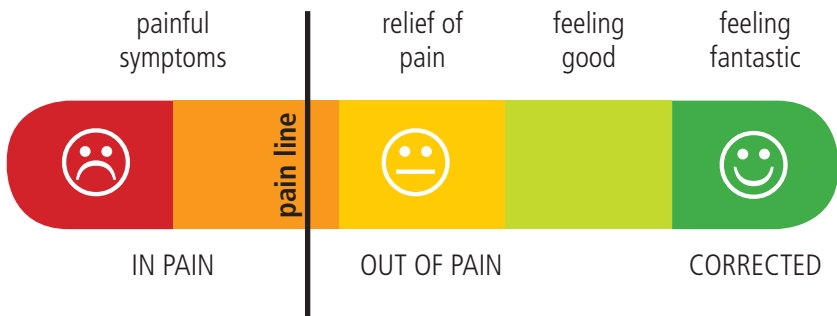
The body is not a machine where you can replace a broken part and everything works again. If the body is damaged, then it will need time to heal and there can also be further consequences to the injury. For example, if you have ever had a leg in plaster you will know that, when it is removed, that leg can be very thin and weak due to lack of use. The same thing happens in the spine - if part of the spine is not working properly then some of the muscles can become weak.

Even after an adjustment, the spine will still be compromised because it has to 'relearn' how to function normally. If there is inflammation, it needs to recover and reduce and will take time to heal. Even when the pain goes, your spine can still be in a fragile state and it is easy to upset it again when there is no pain to remind you of your injury.

## Is Chiropractic just about pain?

No, whilst pain is understandably of great concern to a patient, pain is simply a signal telling the brain that something is wrong. When a patient is experiencing a problem, pain is usually the last thing to appear and when treatment begins, it is often the first thing to disappear.

The real issue is 'what is causing the pain?' The cause must be found and corrected in order to stop a yo-yo effect. Chiropractic can be effective for both long standing (chronic) as well as new (acute) problems.



Where are you on this chart? We would all like optimum health but it is easy to let things slide in the opposite direction.

Most people go from 'no pain' to 'pain' and back again - a yo-yo effect either side of the pain line.

## **Why should I maintain treatments?**

If you have a course of Chiropractic treatment and do all the things you are asked, especially the exercises, you will probably end up feeling a whole lot better in many different ways.

If you stop all treatment and exercises, you would probably go back to square one, typically over about six months.

If, however, you choose to maintain your spine in optimum condition, you can look forward to years of feeling great. Each case is different, but the average person comes in anywhere between once a month and once every 3 months for maintenance treatments.

There are a few simple things that you can do to help your body remain healthy:

- Drink plenty of water.
- Supplement your diet with vitamins and minerals - certain vitamins and minerals can help your body recover so ask your Chiropractor for information.
- Exercises - you may be given some simple exercises to do as part of your treatment, which could greatly assist your recovery.



## **Why is it important to keep to my treatment plan?**

We want you to feel the full benefit of the treatments you receive. Each treatment builds on the one before, therefore, if you miss a treatment, this can slow down your recovery.

## **So how does the body work?**

Let's start with the brain. There are two parts to the brain - the unconscious and the conscious.



The conscious is the thinking part and the unconscious is the part that looks after all of the 'automatic' things that go on in your body i.e. breathing, your heartbeat, digestion and the immune system, all of which require no conscious effort on your part. When you go to sleep at night you trust that your brain will keep your body functioning while you sleep so that you wake up in the morning.

Absolutely nothing happens in your body without 'messages' coming from your brain, down the spinal cord and out through the nerves. These nerves also constantly monitor the state of your body by sending messages back, letting the brain know that everything is working correctly. When things go wrong, the nerves send different messages such as pain.

## **What are joint restrictions (fixations) and why do they occur?**

This is a Chiropractic term, which means a joint in the spine that is not moving properly causing it to function differently.

Abnormal spine movement can cause irritation to the nerves. A stressful lifestyle, sports injuries, poor posture, over work and wear and tear can all cause the spine to malfunction. Stress can make the muscles tighter, pulling on the spine and reducing movement. Abnormal spine movement can go unnoticed, however, there is a general decline in health with minor aches and pains, stiffness etc.

## **What is a trapped or pinched nerve?**

The spinal cord travels down the spine. Branches of the nerves exit at each level through a hole made by two small areas next to the facet joints. These small joints are at the back of the spine behind the disc. If these joints become fixated they can

become irritated which may cause the soft tissues to become inflamed and swollen, leading to pressure on the nerve. This is a pinched nerve.

The nerves can be compromised as we age due to wear and tear and the gaps in the spine where the nerves exit can become smaller and interfere with nerve function. Rather like a hose with a kink in it - the flow of messages from the brain to the body becomes less efficient.

### **What is a slipped disc?**

The disc is made of tough gristle (cartilage) but at the centre there is a softer, thick jelly, which is under pressure and acts as a cushion. If the disc is over-stressed it may develop small tears which the softer centre can squeeze through and, in severe cases, either escape or push the outer casing of the disc causing it to bulge. This bulge can be at the back of the disc where the nerves run.

Disc problems can be viewed as serious, depending on which disc and nerve is involved. Discs can take a long time to heal and the pressure on the nerve can cause considerable pain. Chiropractors can find which nerve is being affected by performing neurological tests.



### **Why are you looking at my back when the pain is in my leg?**

Pinched nerves cause pain in specific patterns usually away from where they are being pinched. The most common is 'sciatica' which means a pain in the sciatic nerve which runs down the back of the leg, this can sometimes be caused by a problem in the low back.

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Be assured that we have probably seen cases like yours many times before. We will only advise you on how to get the best results and if we can't help you, we will refer you to an appropriate specialist. Thank you for putting your trust and confidence in our care.

## What common conditions can be helped by Chiropractic?

The list below details the common problems that we encounter:

- **Back Pain • Headaches & Migraine • Joint Pain • Poor Posture**
- **Neck, Shoulder and Arm Pain • Sciatica • Muscle Spasm & Tension**

For more detailed info please go to our website at: [www.chiropractic-clinic.com](http://www.chiropractic-clinic.com)



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