

# Chiropractic: The Facts

S I M P L E   A N S W E R S   T O   C O M M O N L Y   A S K E D   Q U E S T I O N S

## WHAT IS CHIROPRACTIC?

The word chiropractic comes from Greek, meaning “treatment by hand”. Chiropractic is a highly skilled treatment by trained professionals. It focuses treatment on the source of your back pain, not the symptoms. It’s hands-on treatment that works.

## HOW ARE CHIROPRACTORS TRAINED?

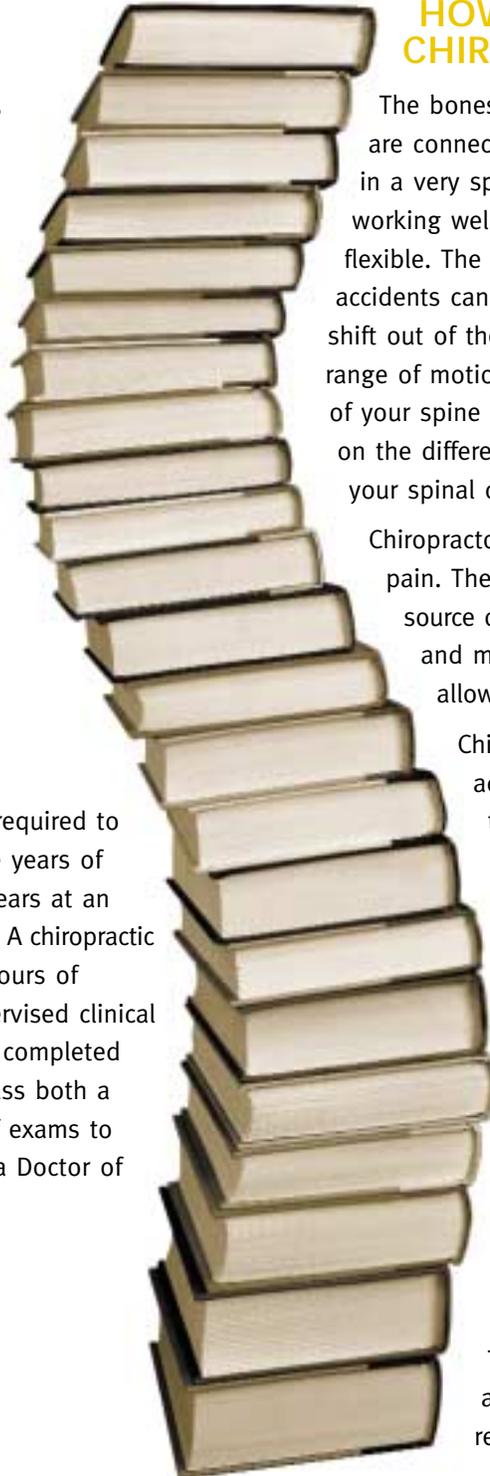
In Canada, chiropractors are required to complete a minimum of three years of university, followed by four years at an accredited chiropractic college. A chiropractic student receives over 4500 hours of education, much of it in supervised clinical practice. Once students have completed their education, they must pass both a provincial and national set of exams to earn the right to practice as a Doctor of Chiropractic (DC).

## HOW DOES CHIROPRACTIC WORK?

The bones in your back, called the vertebrae, are connected by cartilage and work together in a very specific way. When everything is working well, your spine is in-line, strong and flexible. The stress of daily living, injuries, or accidents can cause the bones in the spine to shift out of their proper alignment or affect your range of motion. Small changes in the alignment of your spine can cause pain by putting pressure on the different joints, muscles, and nerves along your spinal column.

Chiropractors understand how to relieve this pain. They are specially trained to find the source of your back pain, assess the problem, and make the proper adjustments that allow your spine to work properly again.

Chiropractic joint manipulation, or adjustment, is a treatment in which the chiropractor uses his or her hands to apply a very quick, precise, and safe amount of pressure directly on the problem area of your spine. This pressure momentarily separates the joints, allowing a gas bubble to escape (this is the popping sound or cracking noise you might have heard about). This relieves the pressure on the joint and surrounding nerves, and most importantly, allows your spine to return to its proper position. The adjustment is not painful, and often provides immediate relief of your back pain.



## IS CHIROPRACTIC SAFE?

The safety and effectiveness of chiropractic treatment has been studied very carefully. Both the medical profession, and more importantly, chiropractors themselves need to be completely certain that the care they provide is safe. Few medical treatments have been scrutinized in as much detail as chiropractic.

To date, no significant findings have shown that the risks are any greater than those for other back pain treatments. In fact, studies have found chiropractic to be extremely safe and effective in alleviating back pain. If a chiropractor diagnoses a problem that would be better treated by another health care professional, he or she will make an appropriate referral.

Complications from chiropractic treatment are rare. Your chiropractor will discuss all potential side effects and risks along with the benefits of any care you receive.

## IS CHIROPRACTIC EXPENSIVE?

The costs of chiropractic treatment are partly covered by the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP). Many private insurance plans, workplaces, and unions also help cover these costs. Chiropractic is increasingly recognized as the most cost-effective and beneficial back pain treatment. This is especially true when compared to the expense of other back pain therapies or the productivity cost of lost time from work.

## HOW TO FIND A CHIROPRACTOR

To find a chiropractor near you, contact the Ontario Chiropractic Association.

Toll free: 1-877-DC's-CARE (327-2273)

Visit our website at [www.chiropractic.on.ca](http://www.chiropractic.on.ca)



## DID YOU KNOW?

- Chiropractic treatment in Ontario is partially covered by OHIP.
- The Workplace Safety & Insurance Board in Ontario recognizes chiropractic as an effective treatment for work-related back injuries. If you are injured at work, the cost of chiropractic care is covered.
- Many private insurance plans cover chiropractic treatment.
- The Insurance Act and Statutory Accident Benefits Schedule (Auto Insurance) allows auto accident victims to choose chiropractic care, and chiropractors can provide all necessary insurance certificates.
- Many employers also provide coverage of chiropractic treatment under their employee health care plans.
- If you have health benefits through your employer or another plan, check with them to find out how you might be covered for chiropractic treatment.

TREATMENT THAT STANDS UP.