

## WHY CHIROPRACTIC TREATMENT IS EVERY SPINE'S CUP OF TEA.

Chances are good that you or someone you know has suffered from back pain. It's not fun. In fact, it can leave you, well, flat on your back.

At least one third of people in Ontario have back pain at any given time, making it the number one cause of chronic health problems in the province. Most people wait up to six months to get treatment. You don't have to let back pain interfere with your enjoyment of life.

Read on to learn more about chiropractic and your back.

TREATMENT THAT STANDS UP.

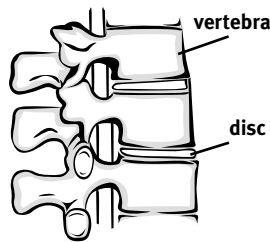
## HELP FOR YOUR BACK.

Chiropractors are back specialists. Many medical doctors in Ontario refer patients with back pain to a chiropractor, and studies show that chiropractic treatment is increasingly recognized as the most safe and effective treatment for most patients with back pain.

Chiropractic is a drug-free, hands-on treatment that can immediately treat the source of your back pain. Accidents, stress, or poor posture can injure your spine causing pain in the surrounding muscles, joints and nerves. Chiropractic treatment works because it treats the cause of your back pain, not just the symptoms.

Simply put, it's treatment that stands up.

The spinal column is made up of 33 vertebrae (bones) separated by 23 discs. The vertebrae in your sacrum (base of your spine) and coccyx (tailbone) are fused together and have no discs between them. Not only does your spine support most of your body weight, it also protects your spinal cord, which is the “central highway” of your nervous system.



## WHAT IS CHIROPRACTIC?

Chiropractic is a highly skilled treatment by trained professionals. The word chiropractic comes from Greek, meaning “treatment by hand”.

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

## HOW DOES CHIROPRACTIC WORK?

Your spine has a very important function in your body. Not only does it support your body's weight, it also protects your spinal cord, which is the “central highway” of your nervous system. Our ability to walk, run, jump, lift, and feel almost every sensation below our neck requires a healthy spine.

### Chiropractors understand how to relieve pain.

The bones in your back, called 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 to shift out of their proper alignment or affect their range of motion. These small changes can cause pain by putting pressure on the different joints, muscles, and nerves along your spine.

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. Chiropractors might also use massage, ultrasound, or other therapies to treat your back problem. Your chiropractor will likely give you advice on posture and exercise.

### It's simple treatment that works.

Chiropractic joint manipulation or “adjustment” is a treatment where 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, allowing your spine to return to its proper position. The adjustment is not painful, and often provides immediate relief. It's simple treatment that works.

## Chiropractic Dictionary

### Adjustment

A precise, careful set of movements applied to the muscles and joints of your spine, that allows your spine to return its proper position and normal range of movement.

### Biomechanical Dysfunction

Chiropractors are experts in biomechanics, the study of forces and movement in the human body. A subluxation is a form of biomechanical dysfunction.

### Cavitation

The technical term for the popping noise made during an adjustment. It's not your bones "cracking", but the release of a gas bubble when the pressure between two joints is relieved.

### Corrective Care

Treats long term spinal problems that require longer, more complex care.

### Neuromusculoskeletal

Chiropractors describe back pain as a neuromusculoskeletal problem. This term reflects the relationship between the spine, other bones, muscles, and the nervous system.

### Relief Care

Provided for immediate relief of pain and discomfort. Depending on the diagnosis, your age and physical condition, one visit, or several visits over a short period of time may be necessary.

### Subluxation / Joint Dysfunction

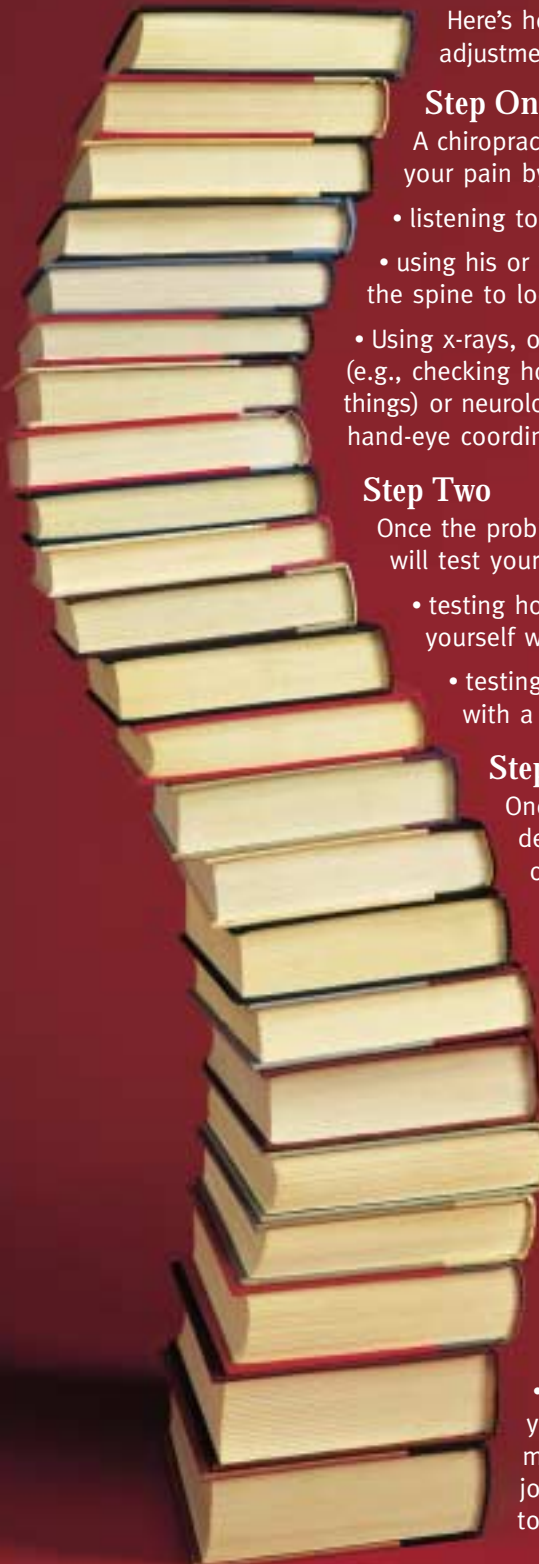
When your spine shifts from its proper position or loses its normal range of motion, pressure on the surrounding joints, muscles, and nerves can cause back pain. Chiropractors call this a subluxation or joint dysfunction.

### Supportive or Maintenance Care

Helps you maintain and enjoy the benefits of relief and corrective care. Continuing to work with your chiropractor will keep your spine as healthy as it can be.

## ANATOMY OF AN ADJUSTMENT

A quick read on treatment that stands up.



Here's how a chiropractic adjustment works:

### Step One

A chiropractor will locate the source of your pain by:

- listening to you explain your symptoms
- using his or her hands and knowledge of the spine to locate the source of the pain
- Using x-rays, orthopaedic tests (e.g., checking how you walk, bend or lift things) or neurological testing (e.g. checking hand-eye coordination, reflexes)

### Step Two

Once the problem is located, a chiropractor will test your range of motion by:

- testing how far you can move by yourself without any pain
- testing how far you can move with a little help

### Step Three

Once a course of care is determined, and the matter of informed consent discussed, treatment can begin. When a chiropractor determines your range of motion, she or he will:

- carefully position you to isolate the problem and move your affected joint to the limit of its range of motion
- use his or her hands directly on your back to carefully apply the pressure required to move the affected joint
- relieve the pressure on your joint, improving mobility, and allowing the joints, muscles, and nerves to function properly

## DO YOU NEED A CHIROPRACTOR?

Eight out of ten Canadians will experience back pain at some point in their lives. For many people the pain can keep them from work, school, or from keeping up with their busy lives. Early treatment from a chiropractor can help get you back on your feet.

Your spine is one of the strongest parts of your body, but because it carries so much weight, it is also susceptible to injury. Accidents, stress, work, poor posture, sports, or sprains can all cause back problems. When you injure your back, the pain can appear in other areas. Simple things like walking become painful with back injuries, and the changes we make in posture and stride can lead to pain in our hips, knees, and feet.

Here are some symptoms of a back problem:

- Leg pain with numbness, tingling, and/or weakness
- Back or leg pain when coughing or sneezing
- Difficulty standing up after sitting for any period of time
- Stiffness in the morning that decreases once you move around
- Pain in your hip, buttock, thigh, knee, or foot
- Inability to turn or bend to each side equally
- Unbalanced posture, when your head, neck, or shoulder may be higher on one side than the other
- Pain which prevents you from sleeping well
- Pain that persists or worsens after 48 hours

Chiropractors treat your back pain by addressing the cause of the pain. It's simple, and it works.

### 10 tips for keeping your back healthy.

- 1 Exercise regularly.
- 2 Follow a healthy diet.
- 3 Maintain good posture.
- 4 Stretch your spine before and after sports.
- 5 Don't overload your backpack or shoulder bag.
- 6 Stretch your legs and back after each hour of sitting.
- 7 Never cradle the phone between your neck and shoulder.
- 8 Sleep on your back or side, not on your stomach.
- 9 Invest in a good chair, pillow, and mattress. It's worth it!
- 10 Have regular spinal check-ups.



### 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)

## CHIROPRACTIC Myths & Facts

One of the myths surrounding chiropractic is the idea that a chiropractor "cracks" your back.

Here's the real deal...

### Myth

**"Chiropractic treatment involves cracking my spine."**

### Fact

One part of chiropractic treatment involves applying quick, precise pressure to the joint, which creates a cracking or a popping noise. This is called an adjustment.

The popping noise doesn't come from your bones, but from the release of a gas bubble when two joints are separated. This is just like when you pop your knuckles, or you scrunch up your toes first thing in the morning.

### Myth

**"No one should use so much pressure on my spine... that can't be right."**

### Fact

The adjustment does not involve a great deal of force. Skill, positioning, speed, and timing are more important than force.

### Myth

**"I heard that cracking your joints can cause arthritis."**

### Fact

There is no reason to think there is a connection. In fact, an adjustment increases mobility, reduces pressure on the joints, muscles, and nerves, and allows the spine to return to a natural position.