

The chiropractic profession essay



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Introduction Chiropractic is very important in the United States health care system; it is one of the largest forms of alternative medicine used (Kaptchuk, 2000). Chiropractic has been in the United States since the 1890s. It was founded by Daniel David Palmer and his son, Bartlett Joshua Palmer, helped to expand it. Chiropractic focuses on the treatment of the musculoskeletal system. It focuses on spinal manipulation to help with certain illnesses. The most common things it is used to help are back pain, headaches, and neck pain.

Chiropractors usually go to approximately 8 years of school and are regulated and licensed in the United States in the same way as medical physicians. For much of its time, chiropractic has been looked down upon compared to mainstream health care. Many people argue about whether chiropractic should be used over conventional medicine. History Chiropractic can be traced all the way back to 2700 B. C. in China and Greece. Writings from these countries mention using spinal manipulation to help with back pain. A Greek physician even published texts about chiropractic.

In one of the texts published he said, “ Get knowledge of the spine, for this is the requisite for many diseases. ” (American Chiropractic Association, 2008).

In the United States, chiropractic was believed to be started in 1895 by Daniel David Palmer in downtown Davenport, Iowa. Palmer was well educated in the medical field and knew many of the new developments regarding physiology and anatomy. David Palmer began the Palmer School of Chiropractic in 1897. His son Bartlett Joshua Palmer, who was also a student at the Palmer School of Chiropractic, took over the school in 1906.

At this time, many chiropractors were being prosecuted for practicing without a license. This is when it was decided, with the help of Bartlett Joshua Palmer, that chiropractic and medicine were separate (American Chiropractic Association, 2008). Daniel David Palmer and Bartlett Joshua Palmer both believed in the use of straight chiropractic. Straight chiropractors believe that medical diagnosis does not have anything to do with the chiropractic treatment and mixer chiropractics use approaches from both chiropractic and medical viewpoints (Cuellar, 2006).

In 1910, Bartlett Joshua Palmer realized that not many straight chiropractors existed. Many of them were mixer chiropractors. This is when Bartlett Joshua Palmer decided that x-rays were necessary in chiropractic for diagnosis. This made the Palmer School much more popular (Leach, 2004). Around the 1930s chiropractic became the largest alternative medicine used in the United States (American Chiropractic Association, 2008). Requirements and Regulations The educational requirements for chiropractic are very similar to other health care doctors. It consists of three main areas.

These are basic science, clinical science, and finally a clinical internship. They first must have at least 4 years of undergraduate work in the pre-medical field, including courses in psychology, histology, physics, and biology. Once accepted into a chiropractic college, they have another 4 to 5 years of schooling, much of which is spent in clinical training. Some classes they take in this part of their education include orthopedics, neurology, radiology, and nutrition classes. They also learn the specific forms of chiropractic therapy as well as the different techniques.

They then must complete a one year internship dealing with patient care. This totals a minimum of 4, 200 hours that is required for chiropractic education. These 4, 200 hours must be from an accredited chiropractic program. Of these 4, 200 hours, 555 of them are dedicated to learning about the techniques. They also must pass the national board exam as well as any exam that is required in the state in which they plan to practice. This exam is prepared and administered by the National Board of Chiropractic Examiners (American Chiropractic Association, 2008).

Fraud, abuse, and quackery occur more in the chiropractic than in any other health care area. This is why chiropractic has become licensed and regulated in the same way as medical physicians in the United States (Cuellar, 2006). There are chiropractic boards in the United States that help with this regulation (Leach, 2004). There are many different ways in which you can help yourself from not being a victim of fraud in the chiropractic system. One very important thing to do is ask questions. Ask what they are doing each procedure for and what they are treating while doing it.

Another good idea to do is check your bill to make sure the chiropractor is charging you the right amount. If any of your peers attended the same chiropractor and had the same services given to them, you could compare your bill with them. Another even that might point to fraud is if people are traveling long distances to visit a certain chiropractor when one is available in their area. This could show that there might be some scams going on. Each person should just keep their eye open for any suspicious activity that may be happening (Kaptchuk, 2000). Techniques Spinal manipulation is the most common treatment used in chiropractic.

This can also be called spinal adjustment or chiropractic adjustment. Spinal manipulation is a movement in which the three-joint complex is taken past its normal range of movement, but not taken far enough to be dislocated or damaged. This three-joint complex is part of the synovial joints that are in the spinal column. This movement, which can be called a thrust, is done to increase the range of motion for the joint. Spinal Manipulative Therapy is when the hands are used in a variety of ways to influence the spine. There are many different techniques used, but most chiropractors mix them together.

Diversified technique is full spine manipulation. The Activator technique uses a spring-like tool to help with adjustments of the spine. With the Gonstead technique, the chiropractor looks at the spine as a whole and believes that one misalignment can affect other areas of the spine. Applied Kinesiology uses muscle testing as its main tool for medical diagnosis. The Cox/flexion-distraction uses adjustable tables with movable parts to help with adjustment of the spine (Leach, 2004). All of these techniques listed can be used during chiropractic treatment. Types of Chiropractors

There are differences that exist between the styles and beliefs of various chiropractors. There are two main types of chiropractors which are known as straight chiropractors and mixer chiropractors. Straight chiropractors believe that the medical diagnosis of patients does not have anything to do with the chiropractic treatment. They believe and follow the philosophical principles that were used by Daniel David Palmer, the founder of chiropractic. Daniel David Palmer believed that misaligned spinal vertebrae were the cause of

almost all diseases. They also like to stay separate from mainstream health care.

Mixer chiropractic uses approaches from chiropractic and medical viewpoints. They care about the medical diagnostics and use treatments such as acupuncture, massage, heat packs, ice packs, and herbal remedies. Mixer chiropractic is what most chiropractors use today (Cuellar, 2006).

Patients There are many different reasons why people go to see the chiropractor. The most common ailment that chiropractors treat is low back pain. Other common ailments that chiropractic is used for is the treatment of whiplash, neck pain, migraine headaches, and tension headaches.

Some ailments it has been used for which are not very common include asthma, ADHD, dizziness, vision conditions, carpal tunnel syndrome, menstrual cramps, scoliosis, and pelvic pain during pregnancy. It has not been proven that chiropractic actually works for these things (Leach, 2004).

Cost and Insurance Coverage The cost of going to the chiropractor differs from every office. The average cost is usually around \$40-\$50 for each visit. Although it costs \$40-\$50, many insurance companies now cover chiropractic visits. The majority of American workers have some sort of coverage for chiropractic services in their health care plan.

The American Chiropractic Association actually maintains contact with insurance companies to help resolve chiropractic insurance problems. The average salary of a chiropractor ranges from \$67, 641 to \$101, 492.

Geographic location, experience, and accomplishments of the chiropractor influence their earnings. There is a high rate of job growth for the

chiropractic profession because of an increasing demand for public health care. This is because people's attitudes toward contemporary and alternative medicines have changed and the drug and surgery free methods of chiropractors have become more appealing (American Chiropractic Association, 2008).

Research Low Back Pain Low back pain is the most common reason why patients visit the chiropractor. Back pain can have many different causes. The back consists of bones, muscles, joints and ligaments. Any four of these things can be the cause of a back pain. Back pain may arise from accidents or sports injuries, but can also be from very simple movements. A person could just bend over to pick something up and make a wrong movement while doing this. Other ailments that cause back pain are obesity, stress, poor posture, or diseases in organs (Kaptchuk, 2000).

The Agency for Health Care Policy and Research, which is part of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, did an extensive study on all care currently available for low back problems. They recommended spinal manipulation as the only effective, safe, and drugless way to treat lower back pain (American Chiropractic Association, 2008). Another research study also compared the results of thirty-six clinical trials in which spinal manipulation was compared to other treatments. Of these thirty-six, twelve were for patients with low back pain.

From the twelve trials, eight reported their back pain improved and four reported no difference in their back pain (Koes, 1996). This research shows that chiropractic does work for most people when it comes to low back pain. I

believe chiropractic is a good way to treat back pain. Even if it does not work for a certain person, it is not very expensive and is still safe. From the studies I found on back pain, there were no negative side effects. If a person has tried other treatments for their back pain and it has not worked, they should give chiropractic a try. Neck Pain

Your neck contains seven vertebrae and begins at the base of the skull. Your cervical spine supports all the weight of your head, and gives you the capability to move your head in many directions. The flexibility also makes it very easy for a person to injure their neck. Some of the most common causes of neck pain are accidents, poor posture, obesity, and growing older (American Chiropractic Association, 2008). A study published in the British Medical Journal did a randomized controlled trial that included 183 patients with neck pain. The patients were allocated among spinal manipulation, physiotherapy, and general practitioner care.

The spinal manipulation resulted in the fastest recovery and was about one-third of the costs (American Chiropractic Association, 2008). Another study was done by UCLA professors to determine the frequency of adverse reactions to chiropractic care for neck pain. Of the 280 patients that participated, about thirty percent of them had negative symptoms from chiropractic care. These symptoms included increased neck pain or stiffness and headaches. This study shows that there are some negative symptoms of chiropractic care when used to treat neck pain (Hurwitz, 2005). Headaches
Tension-type headaches are very common.

They actually affect more than one third of the population. Symptoms of tension headaches include tightening and pressing in your forehead, on the sides of your head, or on the back of your head. They can last from thirty minutes to an entire week. The difference between tension headaches and migraines is that nausea and vomiting, which are sometimes present with migraines, are not present with tension headaches (Bove, 1998). A study was done on a group of people that met the criteria for tension headaches defined by the International Headache Society. This group included 49 women and 26 men.

They ranged from 20 to 59 years old. They were separated into two groups. One group received spinal manipulation and the other received a placebo treatment. The group that received the placebo treatment is known as the control group. The study was done over 4 weeks and each person received 8 treatments. After the first 2 weeks, the results demonstrated that there was no difference between the effects of the control group and the group that received the spinal manipulation. By week 7, however, the number of hours that the participants had tension headaches decreased in the spinal manipulation group.

Even though the number of hours decreased in which they had these headaches, the intensity of the headaches remained unchanged (Bove, 1998). A test was also conducted to see whether spinal manipulation helped in the treatment of migraines. Migraines are painful headaches which usually come with nausea and vomiting. Usually migraines are on one side of the head and can last 4 to 72 hours. The trial lasted 6 months and it consisted of

3 stages. These stages were pre-treatment, treatment, and post treatment. Each stage lasted 2 months.

There were 32 participants who ranged from ages 23 to 60 years and all have had a minimum of one migraine per month. The participants each received two months of spinal manipulation from a chiropractor. The group showed a major improvement in the number of migraines received and how long they lasted. One participant said that the migraines were worse after the spinal manipulation. Other than this one participant who said their migraine was worse after spinal manipulation, there were no other side effects reported. This test showed that spinal manipulation does work to treat migraines.

However, they did not have a control group in this experiment to compare results to (Tuchin, 1997). I believe another test will need to be done that has one group receiving spinal manipulation and one group receiving a placebo treatment. Conclusion Chiropractic has been around for a long time in the United States. The work of Daniel David Palmer and Bartlett Joshua Palmer has helped to expand the chiropractic profession. The treatments of chiropractic have remained similar from when it started to now. The main technique chiropractic uses is spinal manipulation.

Chiropractic builds off of this spinal manipulation to the use of other techniques. It has helped with the treatment of things such as back pain, neck pain, and headaches. Although it has helped many people, should chiropractic be used over conventional medicine? Whether chiropractic should be used over conventional medicine is an argument that each person

must decide for themselves. The results of research conducted shows that spinal manipulation is beneficial for low back pain, neck pain, and migraines in some cases. However, it did not show much improvement for tension-type headaches.

Chiropractic is cost-effective and I believe that for things such as low back pain and neck pain people should give it a try. There were no side effects in the studies where chiropractic was used for low back pain and neck pain other than it maybe did not work. Visiting the chiropractor may have some risks involved, but they are very slim and there may also be risks associated with traditional medicine. However, they should watch out for any signs of fraud or quackery, for those are more common in chiropractic compared to other health care professions. References

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