

WHEN SHOULD I SEE THE CHIROPRACTOR?

By Dr. Derek Conte

Big questions for would-be patients of chiropractic are, "Should I see a chiropractor?" and "How often should I be adjusted?" As with many things in life, the answer varies with the needs of the individual. Most people seek chiropractic care because of pain or the failure of other healthcare methods to help them. Some are seeking a ray of hope in their lives.

The purpose of the chiropractic adjustment is to restore the spinal column to normal position and motion. When this is done, nerves are relieved of interference and can carry accurate messages back and forth between the brain and every muscle, organ and gland in the body, including the five senses. Chiropractors also adjust the extremities, like the shoulders, elbows, wrists, hips, knees, ankles and feet.

The chiropractic goal is to achieve good alignment and for the patient to "hold" it long enough for the body to heal. Holding the adjustment may take a week or more to achieve, then his visits should be spaced out more and more over time, so the body can do its real repair work. Patient commitment, not

surprisingly, is vital to the best results.

After an initial consultation, exam and adjustment, the patient is seen several times over the next week or two. If the patient is holding, they are released from care or may continue on a progressively lighter and lighter schedule, if they choose. The point is to gradually build up the body around a stable foundation. Some patients can reach a monthly interval in as little as five visits and eventually may hold for as long as months or a year or more. Healthier people and kids are like this.

There are cases, of course, that vary from the norm, such as auto accidents, where visits are more concentrated early, or in chronic conditions like degenerative arthritis, which generally benefit from regular adjustments spaced out over greater time. It is better to have recovery in fewer adjustments. The key to this is adjusting only the "right" things, not "every thing"! Sometimes less is more.

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