



By Marcia Krueger, DC

Chiropractic Care

Who Knew?

Chiropractic care can help you regain balance so that you can continue with your movement of choice, at whatever size, and have less pain throughout your weight-loss.

I just had a visit with a female patient who had gastric bypass surgery six months ago. She and I celebrated today. Not only has she lost 67 pounds, but based on her body mass index of 34, she is no longer considered morbidly obese. As her chiropractor, I have been there to support the physical changes of her body and advocate for her healthier lifestyle.

With weight-loss, her center of gravity has changed. The demands on her lower back, hips, knees, ankles and feet have changed. I adjusted her spine and joints before her surgery and continue to do so. My goal is to keep her body in balance.

I am a chiropractor who specializes in the treatment of overweight and obese children and adults. I grew up struggling with weight issues and know what it's like to go to a medical doctor's office and be reminded that I'm overweight. I am married to a large man and have children who also struggle with their weight. I understand the pressure to "fit in" and have experienced the frustration of someone telling me "if you could only lose some weight, you'd be fine." In reality, losing weight is only part of the answer. It's the unexpected changes you experience while trying to get healthier that few talk about.

I became a doctor of chiropractic because I have a passion for helping people at whatever age, shape or size. If you're large, you know it. I don't need to remind you of it. I do need to help you feel more comfortable in your body and hurt less. This article explains chiropractics and its benefits for the overweight and obese.

What's it all about?

Chiropractic care is available to all ages and all sizes. Chiropractors provide hands-on, drug-free and non-surgical treatments, relying on the body's inherent ability to heal. Doctors of chiropractic are best known for their ability to relieve back pain. But, it's more than just spine care.

As chiropractors, we promote health, wellness, balance and active lifestyles. We provide our patients with strategies to improve their postures and help make everyday life a little easier. We help increase motion and flexibility and decrease pain in your spine and joints of the arms or legs and also treat headaches. Chiropractic care is a conservative, safe and effective option of healthcare.

The Brain/Body Connection

Your brain is your command center. It tells your body what to do by way of nerves which travel down your spinal cord into your fingers and toes. Nerves throughout your body provide information back to your brain about position, sensations and pain. Your spine protects this highway of information being sent to and from your brain and body. Any interruption of these signals can cause a traffic jam, which prevents your body from working at its optimal level. This can result in lower resistance to disease and can cause an overall loss of health.

Chiropractors pay attention to the nerves that control muscles and the impact nerves have on the mobility of joints and bones associated with them. Chiropractic adjustments

What Can I Expect When I Go to a Chiropractor?

Your first visit will begin with a conversation about your health history and details about your current complaint. Next, your chiropractor will perform an examination that includes easy instructions about moving your spine or problem area(s), analyzing your posture and finding out if any of your joints are not moving well.

Chiropractic care is a hands-on practice, so expect a chiropractor to use his or her hands to touch you. It is difficult to diagnose problems in joints if we don't move and challenge them. Ultimately, we want to determine the cause of your pain and figure out a way to relieve it.

I prefer to do an examination, perform physical tests, review the findings of the tests and develop a treatment plan during your first appointment. Your first appointment will include an adjustment and it may include electric muscle stimulation, ultrasound and hot or cold packs. Most of my patients report immediate relief from pain following their adjustment.

Before you leave my office, you will know what I plan to do at your next appointment, what you will do at home before we meet again, and what we will do together to allow you to move more freely and with less (or without) pain. Each subsequent visit includes a discussion of how you're feeling, progress with the prescribed home activities or exercises, answers to questions you may have, hands-on examination of your spine or problem area(s) and plans for the next visit.

restore the function of the nerves by moving the bones of the spine into proper alignment, removing any interference and clearing the path for the body to heal itself.

What is a Chiropractic Adjustment?

Chiropractors are trained to treat the whole body with an emphasis on examining joints, the point of connection between two bones in the body. Chiropractors use their hands to restore movement. We use special adjustments to restore joint movement so you have less pain and can move easier. An adjustment is the application of a specific, controlled force adjacent to joints that have become restricted, feel stiff and literally get "stuck."

What is so Important about Joints?

Weight-bearing joints in the body, including the hips, knees, ankles and the lower back, are sometimes stressed with weight gain. Even a 10 pound weight-loss or gain can have an impact on your balance and alignment. Chiropractic care can help you regain balance so that you can continue with your movement of choice, at whatever size, and have less pain throughout your weight-loss.

I have a male patient who is 6'3" and 380 pounds. At the age of 50, he decided to make some lifestyle changes in order to get healthier. He had been a former athlete whose active lifestyle changed, eating more as life became more stressful. Through his 30's and 40's, his medical doctor warned him of the negative side effects associated with being overweight and his doctor prescribed medication for high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes.

Soon, he found the medications had side effects, leaving him tired and sore. He needed a change. He shared with me how discouraging it had been to try to exercise and then have his body scream at him for walking only 20 minutes on a treadmill. In our first meeting, he shared, "If I'm supposed to move, I'm going to hurt. If I'm going to hurt, I won't want to do it."

The frustration in his voice was evident as he described the struggle with the pain in his ankles, knees and hips. He knew it was the right thing to do, but it seemed impossible for him to continue. He had a long history of trying to exercise, lose weight and be healthier but it didn't lead him to a more active lifestyle, instead it led him to be more sedentary because of the pain he experienced. His stomach couldn't handle daily ibuprofen. He came to me for help.

After an examination, I discovered he had several joints in his spine that weren't moving and were the source of his daily headaches, muscle spasms in his upper back and shoulders and pain in his low back and hips. In addition, his ankles and knees were out of alignment. I adjusted his spine and affected joints. I gave him stretches to do while at home and we discussed his treatment plan that outlined my expectations for his reduction in pain and his return to

balance. Today, he is able to walk on the treadmill for 45 minutes without ankle pain. He continues to add strengthening exercises and a variety of activities back into his life and has lost weight.

Time and again I have patients who come to me in the same position asking, "How can I exercise, lose weight and get healthy if the process hurts so much?" That's where chiropractic care can help. It can help your body stay in alignment and reinforce your personal motives for weight-loss or more activity.

How Do I Find a Chiropractor Who Can Help Me?

Chiropractors treat patients in all 50 states. You can find them online or in the phone book, and insurance companies have lists of providers. Personal referrals from friends are a good way to find a chiropractor. Some specialize in children, geriatrics, pregnancy, nutrition, sports injuries or family

care. You may need to visit several clinics before you find the “right” one, as no two chiropractors will care for you the same. It’s not a “one-size-fits-all” approach to healthcare.

You’ll know when you’re in the right place. If you go into a clinic and the chiropractor says something like, “you’ve got a lot of mass,” you’re in the wrong place. It’s not just about weight. It’s about being comfortable and finding balance, whether you’re 100 or 600 pounds.

About the Author:

Marcia Krueger, DC, is the owner of Innate Ability Chiropractic in a suburb of Minneapolis, MN. Dr. Krueger is also a proud member of the OAC. To contact her, email MAKruegerDC@comcast.net or call (952) 746-5199.



ABOUT THE OBESITY ACTION COALITION (OAC)

The Obesity Action Coalition (OAC) is a National non-profit organization dedicated to giving a voice to individuals affected by obesity and helping them along their journey toward better health. Our core focuses are to elevate the conversation of weight and its impact on health, improve access to obesity care, provide science-based education on obesity and its treatments, and fight to eliminate weight bias and discrimination.



VIBRANT COMMUNITY



NATIONAL AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS



ANNUAL CONVENTION



ADVOCACY



PUBLIC EDUCATION

LEARN, CONNECT, ENGAGE

The OAC knows that the journey with weight can be challenging but we also know that great things happen when we learn, connect and engage. That is why the OAC Community exists. Our Community is designed to provide quality education, ongoing support programs, an opportunity to connect, and a place to take action on important issues.

Through the OAC Community, you can get access to:

- Weight & Health Education • Community Blogs
 - Community Discussion Forum
 - Ongoing Support • Meaningful Connections
- AND MUCH MORE**



JOIN TODAY: GO TO OBESITYACTION.ORG/JOIN

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