

## Dr. Kinsinger, Neck911USA.com Elicit Storm of Reader Response

Editorial Staff

We first reported on Neck911USA.com in the July 16, 2005 issue. A billboard in New Haven, Conn., proclaimed: "Warning: Chiropractic Adjustments Can Kill or Permanently Disable You!" The billboard referred people to a Web site called Neck911USA.com. Following an extensive investigation leading to an interview (Aug. 14 issue), we learned that John W. Kinsinger, MD, is the man responsible for the creation of this decidedly anti-chiropractic Internet site.

Following the publication of those articles, *DC* received a variety of responses from chiropractors around the globe. In an effort to facilitate productive dialogue within the profession, we have reprinted as many correspondences as possible, as follows. Although some responses have been excerpted, and others omitted entirely due to space constraints, we offer our sincere appreciation to everyone who has taken the time to address this important issue.

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"Let Us Each Deliver Our Very Best Skill"

*Editor's note:* The author of the following letter, directed to Dr. John Kinsinger, also sent a copy to *Dynamic Chiropractic*; it is reprinted below in its entirety.

Dear Dr. Kinsinger,

You're probably getting a bit of "fan mail" from chiropractors right about now. I hope you will read my letter. I have not written to enter into a vitriolic debate over whether chiropractic works or doesn't or whether chiropractors or MDs, DOs or whomever should get the award for killing more people a year. It's a useless exercise and I don't really think it gets to the "heart" of the issue. I wrote to share a story with you.

You have chosen your profession, I would hope, because it resonates in your heart as what you can do in this lifetime to help bring a better life to each one of your patients. Someone is going to be better off because you are there to listen and treat according to your expertise and education. You probably hold yourself to a very high standard of care. I would certainly hope you do if you're the one giving me the anesthesia before my operation.

I hold myself to the same standard. I became a chiropractor not because I couldn't "make it" as an MD or a DO, but because it was a chiropractor who saved my life. I chose my profession from my heart and for 27 years I like to think that I have brought healing and comfort and relief from misery to hundreds of people. I helped teach them how to make better choices every day for better health. I sure didn't get rich doing it, either! So, like you, as another human being trying to make our very best way through this life, I work for something better for those people who entrust themselves to my care.

So, I'd like to share a story with you that indirectly addresses your strong fear about chiropractic

patients suffering from strokes from cervical adjustments. It must be fear, because I won't believe that any kind of healer can hold hate and malcontent for others and be effective at all in healing. It doesn't work that way. You are bigger than this fear and the shrinking of your heart that fear brings.

About three years ago, a lady in her early sixties was wheeled into my office in a wheelchair. Her two sons and a granddaughter had brought her to me to see if there was anything to be done for her terrible neck, back and lower back pain. She had been diagnosed by her MD and a neurologist with diabetic neuropathy, was on several medications and had been wheelchair-bound for 4 months or so due to pain and subsequent non-use. She had been told there was nothing more to do for her and to stay home and learn to live with her disease. I wonder how many times I've heard this from patients ... but on with the story.

This woman did NOT want to be in my office. She was despondent, angry and would only answer my questions with curt "yeah and no" answers. Finally, I put my chart down and looked her in the eye. I asked her why she had come to me. She answered that her family had made her come. I asked her what she thought I might do to her. She looked up at me with blazing eyes and told me that she figured I'd probably give her a stroke and that she'd die!

I have to admit, I was a bit taken aback. That was a new one for me. I hadn't heard that one before from any patient in 24 years. So I asked this woman why on earth she would let her family drag her here and why she would let me even touch her. "Because", she said firmly and with conviction, "I guess I'd rather have the stroke and die than live like this."

Well, Dr. Kinsinger, I did inform this lady that I had not managed to cause a stroke in 24 years and was not about to start with her that day. I do not routinely like to have my patients carried out the back door by paramedics. What I also told this poor woman was that if she liked, we would take X-rays and that I would do everything in my power to turn her own healing power back on with chiropractic adjustments. I would not be treating her illnesses or disease processes, only adjusting what I felt would help her body try to heal itself. We would work as a team. And we did.

At two months she was able to stand and get on and off the table from her wheelchair without aid. At three months she "sneaked" into my office using a walker and some help. At four months she could make it up the ramp with her walker unaided. At that time I started her with a physical therapist to re-educate and strengthen unused muscles along with continuing adjustments. At six months she was able to drive again and was using a cane. At this time she walks unaided, up and down steps and over long distances, goes on family vacations, sings in her choir again and has gone back to her part time work in a school lunch room. Oh, and she mows her own lawn and baby sits her great-grandchildren.

I know in my heart that if I never saw another patient, then maybe I became a chiropractor just for this ONE person. Who knows and who can say. You? No, I don't think so. Can chiropractic cure anyone? No. No chiropractor healed anything, or any other doctor, for that matter. We do what we can to help a person heal, in the ways we have chosen to learn how to help. And you are an instrument of the "divine," whatever you choose to call it, just as I am.

That which we fear the most is most likely to be thing we attract to us. Dr. Kinsinger, I invite you with an open heart to visit my office sometime. Should you ever find yourself in need of some good chiropractic care, I'll be glad to welcome you with kindness, care and professional courtesy. And I won't "twist your neck" even once! Just as all MDs and DOs aren't the same, neither is every chiropractor or every adjustment. We really do know what adjustments are safe and effective for what patients.

Perhaps you will find this letter to be with the intent with which I sent it. I hope I have given you even a momentary pause in your tilting at the chiropractic windmill. Do we really have to put up billboards to "save" people from greedy surgeons, or bad drug reactions, or an apathetic internist, or from your misguided image of all chiropractors?

And when you look into the eyes of your next patient, know that somewhere a chiropractor like me is also looking into the eyes of a patient who has come to us for help. Let us each deliver our very best skill, which was, after all, just a gift to us in the first place.

Most respectfully and sincerely yours,

*Dr. Mimi Stauffer, Chiropractor*  
*Cushing, Oklahoma*

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"Let's Take a Frontal Attack on This Issue"

Dear Editor:

I have just read your article about Chiropractic Enemy #1. It is my opinion that we as chiropractors could solve a lot of these issues through a public mass-media educational campaign. I feel we should take all the of the data we have about strokes and cervical manipulation and come up with an honest percentage, along with associated outcomes, including incidence of death etc., and put it on every major television channel, in every national newspaper, magazine, etc.

Included with this, we should tell people about the positive - the reality of how safe chiropractic is compared to pharmaceuticals - and use a real-life example in the ad, citing deaths from NSAIDs. When we do this, we should take a hint from our pill-pushing friends and do it as a living testimonial: an attractive older woman walking on the beach, telling us about her neck pain and headaches and how she turned to chiropractic, and how it changed her life. She would tell the world about the risks in an intelligent way, but point out that after analyzing the data by taking medicine and after experiencing some of the associated side-effects, she made the intelligent decision. Then she could tell us how her quality of life has been enhanced; she now can play with her grandchildren, etc. We all have the patients that this would apply to.

Finally, chiropractors could be sold a pamphlet that correlates with the ad campaign and that included danger or red flags signs for stroke - adding that people suffer from stroke in (list: getting hair done, backing up cars...) and spontaneously. Have them report to the local emergency room ASAP, if they have any of the listed red flags. Finally, have a website with all the information presented that also correlated with the ad campaign.

Let's take a frontal attack on this issue. Give the public the truth and let them make an informed decision. This would do two main things. It would take the air out of the sails of these antichiropractic nut cases by exposing their twisted facts, but yet in a way giving them what they supposedly want (?) by informing the public of the risks. Additionally, it would help all of us on the malpractice front if we experienced one of these unfortunate rare events. Mr. or Mrs. Jones would have a difficult time claiming that they were unaware of the risk factors in a court room - especially if each of the jurors had seen the commercial and had a good understanding of the data.

I also believe that it would achieve good will, increase our status in the eyes of the viewing public, and educate the other medical professionals in our communities. It amazes me how biased some neurologists are about cervical manipulation, but then why shouldn't they be; they are only

exposed to the biased information being propagated by some of their own.

Finally, it would educate our ranks including those that think it could never happen to them. I for one would make a contribution to this campaign.

It's the right thing to do.

*D.C. Dillree, DC*  
*Evanston, Wyoming*

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#### Support From Outside the Profession

Dear Editor:

I am 21 years old, a strong supporter of chiropractic medicine, and genuinely interested in the profession; that's why I read *Dynamic Chiropractic* regularly online. I thought it might be interesting and different for DCs to read something from a young person who supports them and views their profession as an art.

I was angered by some of John W. Kinsinger, MD's comments that he made in the August 14, 2005 issue. They were not accurate or fair. In the United States, an estimated 140,000 people die each year from drug-related reactions prescribed by MDs like Dr. Kinsinger.<sup>1</sup> The risk of death due to gastrointestinal complications from taking nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs prescribed by MDs is 400 times greater than the complication rate for people who receive cervical manipulation.<sup>2</sup> The mortality rate for people who undergo cervical spine surgery by MDs like Dr. Kinsinger is 7,000 times higher.<sup>3,4</sup> In the United States, it is estimated that up to 98,000 Americans die yearly from medical doctors accidentally making the wrong incision, administering the wrong medication, and so on.<sup>5,6</sup> Chiropractic's risk of human error is drastically lower.

#### References

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3. Stremple JF, Boss DS, Davis CH, McDonald GO. Comparison of post-operative mortality and morbidity in Veteran Affairs and non-federal hospitals. *Journal of Surgical Research* 1994;S6:405-416.
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*John J. Porterfield*  
*Student, Youngstown State University*  
*Youngstown, Ohio*

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What About Medical Mistakes?

Dear Editor:

Perhaps the chiropractic profession should start a Web site listing the names of all the people who have been killed by medical mistakes over the last century.

*Dennis Fiorini, DC  
Tallahassee, Florida*

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"A Bottom Feeder"

Dear Editor:

Quite an interesting article on Mr. Kinsinger. He is a bottom feeder and a cancer to health care.

Perhaps he could do an interview. We live in a world of accountability. He needs to back his claims.

*Lynn Calhoun, DC*

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## Out of Date and Out to Get Chiropractic

Dear Editor:

I just read the article about Chiropractic Enemy #1. This guy is out of date and is obviously "out to get chiropractic." I am a practicing chiropractor of many years and guys like this fellow Kinsinger suffer from a strange biased affliction. Many medical practitioners in Australia are much more open-minded toward chiropractic and in fact, many specialists give informative lectures at seminars and continuing education programmes. I was once a consultant for a drug company and became disenchanted because of the iatrogenic errors.

Well ... Dr. Kinsinger should take a look at the other side of the coin and make the public aware of the real dangers to billions of unsuspecting patients from the "esteemed" medical profession. I ask you to take a look at the attached document called "Death by Medicine" and perhaps send it to this misinformed wanker to shut him up. Perhaps even go public.

I recall that many years ago that there was a similar accusation made by vigilante type MD in Florida after two deaths associated with chiropractic. Their attacks were unsuccessful.

*Editor's note:* We discussed "Death by Medicine" in the June 3, 2004 issue. Please read "Death by Medicine: New Paper Indicts American Medical System":  
[www.chiroweb.com/archives/22/12/16.html](http://www.chiroweb.com/archives/22/12/16.html).

*Arthur Rothwell, DC  
Forest Hill, Victoria  
Australia*

