

Rejuvenation

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Author's Note: Each patient education article in this column is written to inform your patients and potential patients of the benefits of Chiropractic. It draws on research documented in *Somatovisceral Aspects of Chiropractic: An Evidence-Based Approach*, co-edited by Marion Todres-Masarsky, DC. Whenever possible, I have updated the material from the textbook with more recent research findings. Through New York Chiropractic College, I offer two online courses dealing with somatovisceral topics; for further information, visit www.NYCC.edu.

Recently, an international research team, including Christopher Kent, DC, published a paper indicating that chiropractic care may assist the body in preventing DNA damage consistent with the aging process. This paper brought to mind the many changes related to chiropractic care that involve improvement in biological markers of aging. The following patient education article reviews this recent research in the context of some previous findings. Please feel free to use it on your bulletin board, for lay lectures, and in your practice newsletter.

A person in an acute crisis has no trouble understanding why their misaligned or restricted spinal joints (spinal subluxations) must be adjusted. The pain and other unpleasant sensations (numbness, stiffness, etc.) are glaringly obvious reminders that subluxations cause nerve irritation. However, even in the absence of such a crisis, subluxation can make you feel old beyond your years.

For instance, loss of muscular control and balance are common consequences of the aging process. You may have noticed one-sided muscle tension and other manifestations of muscular imbalance when you haven't been adjusted in awhile. After your subluxations are corrected, you probably realized that your muscular control and balance have improved.

Loss of vitality ("pep" or "energy") is a frequent complaint as people age. Chiropractic researchers have developed a simple form that correlates with established measurements of vitality.¹ It is called the Global Well-Being Scale (GWBS) and takes just seconds to fill out. Most people register an improvement in their GWBS following a chiropractic adjustment, indicating a more "youthful" energy level.

Loss of breathing capacity is an established biological marker of aging.^{2,3} Two studies have appeared in the chiropractic clinical literature indicating that breathing capacity improves after a series of chiropractic adjustments.^{4,5} These studies demonstrated that even patients with lung volumes normal for their age on the initial visit often improved after a series of chiropractic adjustments. In other words, it is not uncommon for patients to begin with age-appropriate breathing capacity and end up with "younger" respiration under chiropractic care.

In 2005, an international research team investigated the ability of a person's DNA to resist damage and to repair itself while that person is under chiropractic care.⁶ Previous research suggests DNA damage can be estimated by taking a blood sample and measuring the levels of a naturally occurring group of substances - plasma thiols. In the 2005 study, patients who had received short-

term chiropractic care (104 weeks or less) were compared to patients who had received long-term chiropractic care (105 weeks or more). The plasma thiol levels were significantly higher (and, by implication, DNA protection and repair more efficient) in patients who had undergone long-term chiropractic care.

To be clear, we do not offer a magical fountain of youth. The rejuvenating effects of the chiropractic adjustment can be subtle. However, these subtle enhancements are measurable and valuable. If you are not already doing so, please consider scheduling regular chiropractic check-ups, even if you are pain free. Thank you for your continuing referrals.

References

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