

If You Don't Educate Your Patients, You Can't Give Them the Best Care

Donald Petersen Jr., BS, HCD(hc), FICC(h)

What your patients think and believe greatly impacts your practice. If your patients believe they only need to see you when they are in pain, you only see them after the problem gets worse and their health suffers. If they believe chiropractic is only effective for back pain, that's the only time you see them and they take painkillers (or worse) for every other ailment.

What's more, if your patients don't know you are a resource for nutritional information (and more), they end up listening to a neighbor or pharmacist and their health suffers. If your patients don't understand how chiropractic works, they probably won't refer their family or friends to you.

What your patients don't know can hurt you. Unfortunately, there are many "voices" trying to tell your patients how to be healthy. From billions of advertising dollars spent by the drug industry to the latest diet fad, your patients get too much information from many unreliable, self-serving sources.

Face it: You know you need to educate your patients, but you have very little time as it is. And even if you have the time, how can you know what they have concerns about?

This is exactly why *To Your Health* magazine was created. Your patients have questions, you don't always have time and public opinion is continuously being molded in a world mostly devoid of information about chiropractic. For the past eight months, *TYH* has been sent to your reception area in an effort to:

- educate your patients about the value of chiropractic;
- give them information to share with their family and friends; and
- encourage them to ask you about their health questions.

With more than 15 million potential readers, *TYH* is laying an informational foundation for every doctor of chiropractic to build on.

With next year fast approaching, we would like your input for our 2008 editorial calendar. You can help decide what your patients read - and see - in *TYH*. Just log on to www.toyourhealth.com/youdecide. By answering seven quick questions, you can help give us direction regarding what your patients should learn more about, how well they understand their health and the best ways we can work with you to educate them.

1. What do your patients need to know about (on a scale of 1-5: 1 = don't need to know, 5 = must know):

- Chiropractic
- How chiropractic works
- Why chiropractic works
- Spinal health
- Nutrition
- Herbs
- Exercise
- Posture
- Good eating habits
- Benefits of adjunctive care
- Other (fill in)

1. How sophisticated are your patients about their health care needs?

- They need to know the basics.
- They have a limited understanding.
- They generally understand about their health.
- They are sophisticated; they read and understand health research.

1. Do you distribute printed patient education material?

- Yes
- No
- No, but I would like to

1. Do you send out a patient e-mail newsletter?

- Yes
- No
- No, but I would like to

1. Are you or have you ever utilized cable television to educate the people in your community?

- Yes
- No
- No, but I would like to

1. What is the most important thing you can do to educate your patients?

1. What is the most important thing you can do to educate your community?

Every day, almost 300 million Americans make decisions about their health. Based upon what they hear and read, they decide between drugs and vitamins; healthy foods and junk foods; painkillers and chiropractic. Needless to say, the more your community understands the importance of chiropractic and wellness, the more motivated they will be to utilize your services.

TYH is the first step in an effort to help your patients understand the importance of chiropractic care, regardless of their age or interests. It's free to your reception area. Every article is written to encourage them to have a conversation with *you* about a topic they're interested in. All you have to do is be willing to answer their questions.

If, by chance, they read something you don't necessarily agree with (in *TYH* or any other magazine), their questions will give you the opportunity to speak as an authority on what *will* work best for them. You are always the doctor and *TYH* respects that.

In addition to *TYH* magazine, there is *To Your Health* TV, the cable television program. There is also a patient e-mail newsletter program that not only informs, but also keeps your patients thinking about you.

Please take the quick survey. It will give us the direction we need to serve you. If you have any other questions, please e-mail me at: www.toyourhealth.com/youdecide.

DMP Jr.

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