

Chiropractic: Not a Best-Kept Secret?

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

It has become very common to meet or hear about a famous actor, [performer](#) or [sports star](#) who relies on chiropractic care to keep them healthy and active in their profession. Unfortunately, it is also common for these prominent people to decline to be recognized as chiropractic patients. This leads to a significant amount of frustration on our part, as we are hampered from sharing with you (and the public) the importance of chiropractic as it applies to the lives of well-known, respected people in the public eye.

Given their reliance on consistent chiropractic care, I have to wonder why it is that most famous people don't want to even mention chiropractic. It's only on rare occasions that someone actually makes a public statement. The question probably also applies to most chiropractic patients, famous or not.

There may be several reasons why they don't talk about how chiropractic care contributes to their health and wellness. While you may be able to think of other reasons, here is my list of potential reasons why your patients are not telling their family, friends and neighbors about chiropractic:

- *Ignorance*: They don't really understand how chiropractic works, so they avoid the potential embarrassment of talking about what they don't understand. They don't feel equipped to have a conversation.
- *Uncertainty about application*: They may think chiropractic is just for back pain, so they don't mention you to anyone unless they are complaining about a sore back.
- *"Quack-phobia"*: They may still consider doctors of chiropractic suspect as far as our education and acceptance goes. They don't want to be challenged with other people's negative opinions of chiropractic.
- *Shyness*: They may just be shy and reluctant to discuss anything about their health with anyone.

While there are certainly other potential reasons, I feel that if every DC in the world addressed these issues, more of our patients would be talking to (and referring) more people who need chiropractic care. The solutions to most of these issues center around providing your patients with adequate information. They can't (and won't) discuss what they don't understand (and don't believe they understand).

As we all know, there are different ways people learn. Some need to read it, others need to hear it, and still others require a certain level of interactivity to get their arms around it. Your job and mine is to educate everyone we come in contact with about the important benefits of chiropractic. We do this because we know that the more informed the public is, the more people will seek chiropractic care for their health.

So, what do we need to do? For our part, we have several Web sites that are designed to share information about chiropractic: DynamicChiropractic.com, ChiroWeb.com and ToYourHealth.com. We also have *To Your Health*, the print publication, that is mailed to approximately 60,000 doctors of chiropractic each month to be placed in their waiting room for patients to read. *To Your Health* also has a bi-weekly e-mail newsletter by the same name that reaches more than 168,000 consumer

subscribers.

Your part is a little more hands-on. Every day, you see a number of patients; some are new and some have been patients for years. Find out how well they understand how chiropractic works. Ask them if they know chiropractic is for *more* than back pain and explain how the care they receive impacts their health and wellness. See if they really appreciate your education and qualifications as a primary care doctor.

Help them appreciate the importance of sharing the benefits of chiropractic with people they know. Put something in their hands that represents chiropractic and your practice well; a brochure or information piece that talks about the benefits of chiropractic, how it works and the qualifications of a doctor of chiropractic.

This last point is very important. You can ask them to read it over and pass it along to someone they know who will benefit from chiropractic care. As you give them the first one, see if they know other people who would like a copy of their own. They might ask to take five brochures.

Next time you see them, ask who they gave the brochures to and why they thought those people should seek chiropractic care. This may be uncomfortable at first, so you should let them know at the time you give them the brochures that you will be following up. You may even offer to let their family, friends, or neighbors come in with them during their next appointment if this is something they would be comfortable with.

This is what I did with my wife Evelyn when we were dating many years ago. I took her with me for my adjustment and asked my DC to explain what he was doing and how it worked. He then examined her using motion palpation (of course) and showed her where she was subluxated. A couple of easy adjustments later, she went from someone who didn't know much about chiropractic to someone who clearly understood the value. (Not an absolute prerequisite to our engagement, but it helped.) Evelyn has been a consistent chiropractic patient ever since.

Finally, make certain your [practice Web site](#) tells the chiropractic story the way you want it told. You can't be telling your patients one thing and have your Web site say something else. Review the information on your site and make changes where required.

The [Foundation for Chiropractic Progress](#) is doing a great job at getting positive press for chiropractic. This creates awareness. But it is up to you and me to inform and educate people to value chiropractic for their health and become consistent patients.

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