

## Palmer Recruiting for Blood Pressure Study

DOES CHIROPRACTIC REDUCE BLOOD PRESSURE? PALMER STUDY COULD SUPPORT LANDMARK FINDINGS FROM 2007 CHICAGO PILOT STUDY.

Editorial Staff

The [Palmer Center for Chiropractic Research](#) is recruiting subjects with high blood pressure to participate in a clinical research study designed to evaluate the potential impact of chiropractic care on hypertension. The Chiropractic for Hypertension in Patients (CHiP) study, a collaborative investigation involving the Palmer Center, Mount Sinai Medical Center in Miami, Fla., and Trinity at Terrace Park Family Practice in Bettendorf, Iowa, is one of three research projects to emerge from a \$2.8 million grant awarded to the Palmer Center in 2008 by the [National Institutes of Health](#) to create a multidisciplinary Developmental Center for Clinical and Translational Science in Chiropractic.

"More than 50 million Americans suffer from high blood pressure, making it the most commonly diagnosed disease in the United States," said Dr. Christine Goertz, vice chancellor for research and health policy at the Palmer Center and lead investigator on the hypertension study. "Although many medical treatments for diagnosed hypertension are available, only about 30% of patients achieve blood pressure goals. Many patients report that they are unable to tolerate medication side effects and find it difficult to sustain significant lifestyle changes. Thus, a non-pharmacological therapy that lowers blood pressure could become an attractive option to many patients and their physicians."

Leading the study along with Dr. Goertz are Gervasio Lamas, MD, a cardiovascular scientist at Mount Sinai with considerable experience conducting large, multisite clinical trials; Joseph Bergstrom, DO, director of medical education for the Trinity Terrace Park family practice residency program; and Quad-City cardiologist Dr. Michael Giudici, serving on the study's Data and Safety Monitoring Committee.

"The concept that manipulation of the upper cervical spine could reduce blood pressure is both novel and appealing at the same time," said Dr. Lamas. "It is novel because of its originality of thought, and because it is backed up by preliminary data. It is appealing because any treatment for high blood pressure that does not expose patients to drugs and their side effects should be investigated."

"This should be an interesting trial," added Dr. Giudici. "Work to date has shown that blood pressure responds to other non-pharmacologic interventions such as diet, weight loss, exercise, stress reduction and yoga, [and] there is also some interesting early data on blood pressure response to slowing respiratory rate."

The "preliminary data" Dr. Lamas mentions undoubtedly includes [the landmark 2007 pilot study](#), conducted at the University of Chicago, in which a one-time specialized chiropractic adjustment, delivered to patients suffering from high blood pressure and misaligned C1 vertebrae, resulted in significant reductions in diastolic and systolic BP compared to controls - reductions deemed equivalent to that seen with concurrent administration of two blood pressure drugs.

For the current study, the Palmer Center is recruiting 165 hypertension patients (21-65 years of age); qualifying patients will be randomly assigned to one of three upper cervical treatment groups, all of whom will receive chiropractic care at the Palmer Research Clinic for eight weeks (the same time frame as the Chicago pilot investigation). Blood pressure will be monitored at various points during the study period.

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To learn more about the preliminary research suggesting chiropractic care positively impacts blood pressure in hypertensive patients, read "Can Correction of a Misaligned Atlas Reduce Blood Pressure?" in the [May 7, 2007 issue of DC](#). For more information on ongoing Palmer research projects and funding, visit [www.palmer.edu/research.aspx](http://www.palmer.edu/research.aspx).

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