

Feeding the Mouth That Bites You

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I received an e-mail from Dr. Seth Goldstein recently expressing some concerns about a statement made on the [Web site](#) of a local Bikram yoga business. The statement at issue regards the benefits of Bikram yoga: "The most immediate benefit is an increase in physical strength and flexibility. The stretching of muscles, ligaments, and internal organs provides a wealth of additional benefits, including stress relief, improvement to immune systems, and better body alignment *to prevent the need for chiropractic visits!*"¹ (emphasis added)

It should be noted that this DC is actually a proponent of yoga and has referred numerous patients to try yoga for muscle strengthening and fitness. His wife, Bobbi, actually frequents the offending yoga studio and has been a yoga instructor herself for more than 20 years.

When Bobbi informed the yoga studio owner that the statement on her Web site was both inaccurate and offensive to doctors of chiropractic, the owner responded that "as far as my wording, this is not meant to offend anyone. I'm sorry that you feel 'offended'." The chiropractic couple followed up with suggestions to take away the offensive language, stating that if it weren't taken away, they would not continue as patrons. But to this, they were simply told, "Whenever I update my Web site, I will take this into account. I hope you find a studio that is more suitable to your needs."

The lesson here is pretty obvious, but it needs to be emphasized. Sadly, there are still many people who have a low opinion of chiropractic, some of whom are quite vocal about it. Rather than make a small change to a single sentence on her Web site, the owner dismissed the chiropractic couple, potentially ending all possibility for future referral, let alone their patronage at the studio.

Before you refer your patients to anyone, be they a [yoga instructor](#), fitness trainer, medical doctor, naturopathic physician, acupuncturist, etc., take the time to visit their Web site and do a quick search on the words *chiropractic* and *chiropractor*. You may be surprised to find that the practitioner / trainer / instructor in question actually has a negative position of who you are and what you do – and they aren't afraid to let the world know about it.

In addition, take the time to contact the people you refer and see what their experiences are and what they are being told. My own DC was referring patients to an orthopedist only to discover that he was turning around and referring them to a physical therapist (sadly, not unusual behavior). Needless to say, that relationship came to an end quickly.

The same should be true for the people you do business with in your community. Find out if they support you and your profession or if they are taking your money and then bad-mouthing you behind your back.

I am certain that the doctor and his wife will find a new yoga studio to visit and make referrals to. While the owner of the Bikram yoga business may not care, she will lose in the long run, hopefully to a level that will cause her to reconsider her decision.

We sometimes have a tendency to accept anti-chiropractic statements. It's always easier to just stay silent or walk away rather than get into an argument. For those willing to listen, our silence robs them of a chance to hear the truth. They will continue to ignorantly bash chiropractic until someone confronts their opinion.

For those who will never change their opinion, your speaking up forces them to recognize that there is evidence they are wrong and that not everyone agrees with them. Perhaps they will be slower to make critical comments for fear that another DC (or a chiropractic patient) will take them to task.

Either way, taking a stand for chiropractic is always the right thing to do. It speaks volumes to your staff, patients, community and family. We salute Dr. Seth Goldstein and his wife for standing up for chiropractic.

Reference

1. Bikram Yoga Westlake Village. About Bikram Yoga.
www.bikramyogawestlakevillage.com/about.html.
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Read more findings on my blog: <http://blog.toyourhealth.com/wrblog/>. You can also visit me on [Facebook](#).

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