

Fix It or Cook It?

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From the CNN web page comes an interesting article on a new procedure to eliminate spinal pain. The procedure is called rhizotomy and offers "the promise of nearly instant (pain) relief for some."

The article explains that rhizotomy "works by killing tiny, hair-like nerves along the spine and in the neck." It involves a "tiny radio-frequency generator that produces a precise dose of energy similar to a household microwave oven."

Proponents claim that the new procedure "can raise the temperature of the surrounding tissue by passing radio frequency waves through the probe and the tissue basically cooks."

"It's like hard-boiling an egg," said Dr. Mark Lodico of the Allegheny General Back Institute, where the procedure was apparently developed.

So, this is the new medical answer to back pain? What is wrong with trying to fix the problem? Is it the general laziness of too many medical providers that makes them want to drug it, cut it, or now to cook it?

Is the public so programmed by medical "cures" that they will allow their nerves to be cooked into submission, instead of listen to their body, the neural network in this case, "telling" them that something unhealthy is happening?

One wonders if the drug companies will push to squelch or denigrate such procedures for fear of losing pain-killer revenue? Or perhaps they own the procedure?

Quality of life is taking center stage as the baby boomers grey. To keep all the parts working and relatively pain-free well into the later years is driving many to seek chiropractic and other forms of "alternative" care.

At the same time, our children are increasing their use of cigarettes, alcohol and marijuana (see our graph in the May 5, 1997 issue). Cigarette use by our children has increased 50% over the past five years, while alcohol and marijuana use has just about doubled.

While psychologists will put their own spin on these trends, chiropractors should see these trends as an opportunity. Medicine has, in general, lost the concept of healing. Today's MDs are taught to cut out the problem or numb the pain. So why are we surprised when our children try to numb their emotional pain? Our medically-oriented society has led them down that path.

Medicine will continue to drug, cut and cook patients. But most people are seeking health. They want to be fully-functioning, pain-free individuals living fulfilled lives. People innately know what health is. Even with all of the medical propaganda, many people eschew drugs, hospitals and surgery. They've heard too many horror stories of failed or botched surgeries, or witness the tragedies of drug addiction

and its impact on society.

This is why the quest for "alternatives" will continue to be the dominant force in health care. This is why you and the DCs who struggled before you have been so important to society.

By practicing chiropractic, you maintain the concept of health in its untainted form. Sometimes it may be hard to see yourself as the driving force in a national (and international) trend. You would probably rather just take care of your patients in a hassle-free environment. But that isn't the profession you joined.

Chiropractic may be considered alternative by some, but it is the choice of many. Every day you keep the standard of health care raised high. Your patients are walking testimonies of life free from drugs, surgery and whatever else can be done to the human body in the name of medicine.

At times this can be a heavy load. But take heart, people around the world are changing the way they think about health care and what they want from physicians.

Health is your calling. Accept it with pride. And perform it with all of the compassion and expertise you have to give.

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