

The Problem of Pain

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A recent article was brought to my attention that should send the medical profession (and its drug suppliers) seeking shelter. Titled "Why Almost Everything You Hear About Medicine Is Wrong," the article can be found [on the Newsweek Web site](#).¹ Perhaps the most powerful statement in the article comes from Dr. John P.A. Ioannidis, the new head of Stanford University's Prevention Research Center: "'People are being hurt and even dying' because of false medical claims, he says: not quackery, but errors in medical research."

A must-read for every doctor of chiropractic, this article is just another milestone in the progressively wider path to health care enlightenment that is being traveled by more and more consumers and finally, the media. This article is as sobering as the television ads by attorneys wanting to know "Have you or a loved one ever taken the drug (XYZ)?" This inquiry is usually followed by a long list of now-known unhealthy side effects, which usually includes death. Viewers are naturally directed to call their law offices.

The public is looking for answers. The *Newsweek* article makes clear that claims made based upon medical research cannot always be trusted. Drug manufacturers are extending promises of cure and pain relief, but these promises are many times empty and fraught with danger.

For most doctors of chiropractic, the drug issue centers on the relief of pain. The public has clearly embraced acetaminophen and other seemingly "safe" pain relievers. But [as new research reveals](#) increased risks of asthma, eczema, hearing loss and other more serious ailments,²⁻³ the public will be less inclined to trust acetaminophen and similar OTC drugs.

The chiropractic profession, on the other hand, has developed a long list of systematic non-drug approaches to pain relief. In partnership with numerous vendors, doctors of chiropractic are able to address most types of pain with approaches that not only relieve the pain but also (and more importantly) focus on the cause, which reduces the likelihood that the pain will return and/or become chronic.

Recently, DCs from across the U.S. participated in an inquiry into all of the various ways they resolve their patients' pain in addition to the chiropractic adjustment. The results can be read in a feature article titled that appears in the April issue of *DC PracticeINSIGHTS* and is available online on the *DCPI* Web site at www.dcpracticeinsights.com/painrelief.⁴ Here are just a few of the many ways doctors of chiropractic address pain without drugs in addition to the chiropractic adjustment:

- Acupuncture
- Ice
- Herbs
- Omega-3 fatty acids

- Kinesiology tape
- Laser therapy
- Topical analgesics
- Hydration
- Vitamins
- Decompression therapy
- Ultrasound
- Electrical stimulation
- Homeopathics
- Enzymes
- Prayer-supported tolerance
- Corrective exercise
- Essential oils
- Change of diet
- Myofacial release
- Trigger-point therapy

Having used a number of the above for myself and my family (which includes two children who play club soccer), I have a hard time understanding why pain drugs are apparently required for the overwhelming majority of situations a person experiences in life. Pain has a purpose in our lives. It tells us that there is something *wrong*. Masking or eliminating the pain without assessing and addressing the cause is foolish. Yet despite this fact, nearly one in four of American adults (23 percent) "[use acetaminophen in a given week](#),"⁵ according to the Consumer Healthcare Products Association.

Chiropractic's multiple non-drug solutions, when combined with the healing power of the chiropractic adjustment, have the power to provide complete pain relief. Our challenge with pain is not knowing how to get rid of it, but in letting the public know how much we have to offer when it comes to the relief they are seeking.

References

1. Begley S. "Why Almost Everything You Hear About Medicine Is Wrong." *Newsweek*, Jan. 24, 2011.
2. "Tylenol Causes Asthma, Eczema and Rhinoconjunctivitis?" *Dynamic Chiropractic*, Oct. 21, 2010;28(22).
3. "Use of Analgesics Increases Risk of Hearing Loss in Males." Wellness Report blog, posted 6/17/10.
4. Article published in *Dynamic Chiropractic PracticeINSIGHTS*, April 2011. If your office does not receive *DC PracticeINSIGHTS*, you can sign up for a free subscription at: www.dynamicchiropractic.com/mpacms/dc/practiceinsights/new.php.
5. Acetaminophen Fact Sheet. Consumer Healthcare Products Association. www.chpa-info.org/issues/Acetaminophen_FactSheet.aspx.

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