

## Why Maintenance Matters

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I like being right. As a publisher, you have to be right the vast majority of the time. The other times are filled with apologies and published erratas, which at the very least tend to be embarrassing.

As a chiropractic patient of 62 years, I have always believed in regular chiropractic adjustments, whether I felt like I needed them or not. Many times when I see my DC, I tell him I am "in for my 10,000 mile service." It's a running joke sparked by the amount of traveling I do.

### An Exciting New Study

A paper presented at the European Chiropractors' Union (ECU) convention in Cyprus earlier this year underscores the advantages of regular chiropractic care.<sup>1-2</sup> The authors, whose paper won [first prize](#) in the research competition at the ECU event, looked at how chiropractic maintenance care (MC) could prevent new episodes of nonspecific low back pain or minimize its impact. According to the authors, the purpose of their study was to "investigate the effect of MC as compared to symptomatic treatment on reducing recurrent and persistent LBP."

The multi-center, randomized clinical trial was conducted in Sweden, with patients provided with either treatment at regular intervals, regardless of symptoms (MC), or symptomatic treatment whereby patients were treated only when consulting for pain. The MC group was provided with chiropractic care at one- to three-month intervals.

This is an altogether familiar scenario, in that most patients only go for chiropractic care when something is bothering them. Unfortunately, by the time a patient recognizes their pain, it may be a few days before they can get in to see their DC to address it. If only they could / would visit their DC periodically, regardless of symptoms, a point study results make glaringly clear:

"The MC group consisted of 163 subjects who reported 19.3 (95% CI: 4.9, 33.6) fewer days with bothersome LBP over the 12 month follow-up compared to the 154 subjects in the control group. The MC group had an average of 7 visits during the study, compared to 5 visits in the control group."

### Let's Do the Math

So, here's the math for the average patient. Two extra visits to your office each year will result in almost 20 days without back pain. For me, that works out to about \$4 per pain-free day ... I'll take it!

While monthly chiropractic care is more my personal preference, it is clear that most people should be seeing their doctor of chiropractic at least every two months or so. These results will hopefully inspire conversations with patients who tend to wait for their pain to remind them to make an appointment with their DC. (It has already prompted discussions with the people I know.) They need to understand a little scheduling could significantly improve their quality of life.

Imagine how many days of pain could be eliminated if everyone enjoyed chiropractic at least every two months.

### *References*

1. Eklund A, et al. "Prevention of Low Back Pain: Effect of Chiropractic Maintenance Care as Compared to Symptomatic Treatment - A Pragmatic Randomized Clinical Trial." This study was funded by the Institute for Chiropractic and Neuro-musculoskeletal Research, the European Chiropractors' Union (project ID A13.02) and the Danish Chiropractic Research Foundation (grant number 11/148).
2. 1st Prize - Andreas Eklund, Irene Jensen, Malin Lohela-Karlsson, Jan Hagberg, Lennart Bodin, Charlotte Lebouf-Yde, Alice Kongsted and Iben Axén. "Prevention of Low Back Pain: Effect of Chiropractic Maintenance Care as Compared to Symptomatic Treatment - A Pragmatic Randomized Clinical Trial."

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