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Neck Problems



Just a periodic dental checkup is necessary to keep your teeth healthy, so a chiropractic spinal checkup is necessary to keep your teeth healthy, so a chiropractic spinal checkup is necessary to ensure a nervous system that is free from spinal nerve stress permitting you to experience greater healing and well-being. No matter what disease or condition you have, you can benefit from a healthy spine.

Neck Problems

Your Amazing Incredible Neck

Your neck is packed with all kinds of thing: bones (vertebrae), your spinal cord, cranial and spinal nerves, nerve ganglions, blood vessels, glands (thyroid and others), voice box (larynx), esophagus (food pipe), trachea (windpipe) and muscles, ligaments, tendons and other structures. Your amazing neck balances your heavy head and turns, tilts and bends without damaging its vital occupants.

The Cervical Spine

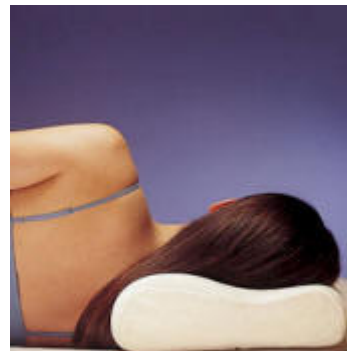
Your neck bones are called cervical vertebrae. Cervix is the Latin word for neck meaning a constricted area (the uterus and urinary bladders have a neck or cervix too). You have seven small neck bones or cervical vertebrae, numbering C-1 to C-7 from top to bottom. C-1 has a special name—the atlas, because, like Atlas in mythology, it balances a globe. C-2, the axis, permits neck movement in many different directions. All the vertebrae work together to balance your head and protect your spinal cord, a continuation of your brain. That is extremely important because a spinal cord injury can result in instant paralysis or death. Your vertebrae are connected to each other by muscles, ligaments and gel-like pads called discs that help give the neck its curve (cervical lordosis). Between the vertebrae are little openings called intervertebral foramina where nerves, blood vessels, lymphatic vessels and other tissues are found.

Nerve Problems

Cervical nerves can become irritated, inflamed or “pinched,” causing head, neck, face, shoulder, elbow, arm, wrist, hand and finger pain; numbness; pins and needles; increased sensitivity or other symptoms. These symptoms “most frequently result from irritation of cervical nerve roots in the region of the intervertebral foramen” or pressure on nearby blood vessels or the spinal cord itself. The most common cause of nerve, blood vessel and spinal cord pressure is a condition chiropractors call a vertebral subluxation, a slightly mis-aligned vertebra causing nerve stress.

Is Your Head on Straight?

Let us suppose that one day you carried a bowling ball around for the entire day, but instead of carrying it closely at your side you held it a little distance from your body. You'd get tired very fast! It's the same with your head. If it's properly balanced that's fine, but if it's held even a little off



center you will start to suffer from fatigue as well as stress on your neck and lower spine.

Causes of Subluxations

Subluxations are caused by a difficult birth, a fall (even as far back as childhood), an accident, by working on one position for a long period or chronic emotional tension.

Whiplash injury is a common cause of neck subluxations. Whiplash and neck injury sufferers may complain of headaches, vision problems, dizziness, ringing in the ears, decreased attention span, learning and memory impairments, emotional changes, nasal, tongue and throat problems. Chiropractic care realigns the vertebrae and removes stress from nerves. Many people suffering from neck problems, including whiplash, have found chiropractic to be a blessing. As one major medical journal reports: "Whiplash injuries are common. Chiropractic is the only proven effective treatment in chronic cases.

The most serious neck injury—fracture, dislocation or severe tissue damage—can be fatal if not given emergency medical care. Most other neck problems, although not life-threatening, can impair your health if not corrected.

Disc Damage and Osteoarthritis

If your spine is unhealthy, you may lose your normal neck curve and suffer from pain, nerve irritation and disc degeneration. Although many doctors tell their patients that this is due to age, disc degeneration can be found in young children while some older adults are relatively free of it. One of the most common causes of disc degeneration is years of uncorrected subluxations.

Over time uncorrected subluxation degeneration causes arthritic changes in the vertebrae such as lipping or spurring (bony growths), disc thinning and deterioration. Studies show little or no correlation between the degree of pain felt in the neck and arthritic changes found on X-rays and MRI. Subluxation degeneration is considered a defense mechanism that tries to stabilize an off-balance spine.

The Orthodox Medical Approach

The standard medical approach to neck pain is often pain killers, muscle relaxers and/or tranquilizers. If the pain doesn't subside, cortisone or other injections may be administered. In some cases physical therapy, neck pillows, collars or traction may be prescribed. Interestingly enough, these constitute a tacit endorsement of the chiropractic approach of releasing pressure on the nerves, joints and openings through which the nerves travel.

Sometimes surgery is needed especially in serious trauma or severe disc herniation. However, in many cases, chiropractic techniques have saved people from neck or disc surgery. There is even evidence that chiropractic care can reverse osteoarthritis—something previously considered impossible.

Surgery should only be considered "as a last resort according to Rene Cailliet, MD, an authority on orthopedic disorders. Even severe torticollis (wry neck) in infants and others is sometimes "fixed" by surgically cutting the neck muscles. This condition as well as many others such as Erb's Palsy; vision problems; hearing problems; and ear, nose and throat infections, has responded to neck adjustments (even in infancy).

The Role of the Chiropractor

Chiropractor spinal care corrects a severe form of spine and nerve stress known as the vertebral subluxation complex ("subluxation"). This restores proper movement to your spinal column, permitting greater energy, information and nutrients to column, permitting greater energy, information and nutrients to flow over your nerves and tissues and throughout your body. When corrected, your entire spine begins to rebalance. That is why, for example, people with lower back problems, after receiving a neck adjustment from their chiropractor, find, to their surprise, that their low back pain not only starts feeling better (as well as many other problems) but they have more energy as well.!

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