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Disc Problems



How to Prevent Disc Problems

Please bear in mind that although chiropractic has been a blessing to many suffers of spine and disc problems, chiropractic spinal care is not a "treatment" for conditions but rather care for your entire body no matter what condition you have. Many times patients visiting their chiropractor for a back of neck problem have been pleasantly surprised at the holistic or whole-body effect of chiropractic. Why wait until a disc becomes "hot" before exploring chiropractic care? Chiropractic care may help prevent your spine from deterioration and herniation. Chiropractors have even helped people relieve the pain and

Disc Problems

Back Surgery

What are Discs and What Do They Do?

Between your spinal bones (vertebrae) are flexible, gel-like pads called intervertebral discs ("discs") for short). Your discs help give your spine its curves and flexibility (a curved, flexible spine is stronger than a straight, rigid one); they also separate and join your vertebrae together. Without them your spinal bones would crash together whenever you walked—a very painful occurrence. Discs affect your height too—you are about $\frac{1}{4}$ " – $\frac{1}{2}$ " taller when you wake up then when you go to sleep. Why is that? Because gravity makes your discs thin a little when you walk and sit during the day and expand a little while you lie in bed (astronauts gain about 1" in height due to weightlessness).

Spinal discs are being studied by many researchers trying to understand how discs are involved in lower back pain.

Disc Protrusion and Prolapse

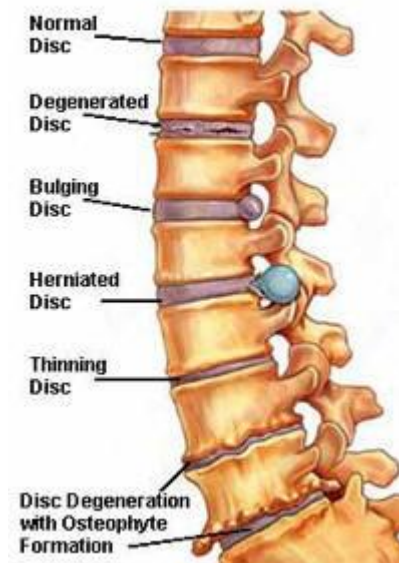
As we age, our discs may lose fluid and small cracks or lesions may form in the outer walls. This damage may also be caused or accelerated by the vertebral subluxation complex, a spinal distortion chiropractors correct. Your disc may bulge, irritate nerves and cause a lot of pain and discomfort. In severe cases disc damage may affect sitting, standing, walking or lifting and cause pain when urinating, defecating, sneezing and coughing. Numbness of the leg or foot or a loss of muscular control may also occur.

Do You Have a Slipped Disc?

A disc cannot "slip" since it is knitted into the vertebrae from both above and below. What sometimes do slip are the vertebrae, which may stress the disc and contribute to its damage. Many "slipped discs" would be more accurately called slipped vertebrae or subluxations.

Organic Disease

Examples of Disc Problems



frustration of failed back surgery (yes, you can receive chiropractic care if you've had spinal surgery (yes, you can receive chiropractic care if you've had spinal surgery) and even prevent future operations. Please, before your problems get worse, have a simple chiropractic spinal checkup. You get your eyes, teeth and blood pressure checked, why not your spine?

Disc degeneration may lead to irritation of spinal nerves and contribute to endometriosis, infections (bladder, vaginal, kidney), urinary retention, prostate problems, miscarriage, sterility, sexual impotence, cystitis, menstrual cramps and constipation. It is not uncommon for an individual who has a chronic back condition to also suffer from one or more of the above problems.

Is Back Surgery Effective?

According to Robert Mendelsohn, MD, "I have seen more than one case in which spinal surgery was avoided by individuals who decided, as a last resort before going under the knife, to see a chiropractor..." His remark has been underlined by many medical doctors and others who find that many patients who decide to pursue a non-operative approach towards disc herniation may avoid the surgery.

Back surgery for herniation should only be attempted as a last resort. That is because back surgery is a dangerous procedure with a high failure rate. One reason for the high failure rate may be that there is much controversy over whether the disc is really the source of spinal pain. A certain percentage of the population has spinal disc degeneration with no symptoms.

The Chiropractic Record

A proper alignment between the disc, the vertebrae and other structures in the spine is the goal of chiropractic care. Chiropractic has been able to save people from spinal surgery. There are reports of an MRI or other imaging device revealing a disc herniation or protrusion in the neck or low back which was reduced or completely reabsorbed under chiropractic care. Had they not sought out chiropractic, many of these individuals undoubtedly would have had surgery. For example, in one study 27 patients documented with disc herniation were given chiropractic care. Post MRIs revealed that 63% of the patients had a reduced or completely reabsorbed disc herniation. Seventy-eight percent were able to return to work. In another study of 21 patients with CT scan diagnosed lumbar disc herniation, their pain disappeared after chiropractic. A follow-up CT scan at least 6 months later showed the herniation reduced or disappeared in most patients.

In another study of 517 patients with protruded lumbar discs, 76.8% had satisfactory results under chiropractic care without surgery.

Is Surgery Never Needed?

Surgery is sometimes necessary. But surgery is an extreme for of health care and it has many dangers. Many times spinal surgery fails and must be repeated, sometimes more than once. It should only be considered as a last resort after more natural, less invasive methods have been given a fair chance.

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