



# BACK PAIN AND STATISTICS

By: Bob Maybee, DC

## BACK PAIN AND STATISTICS

Although chiropractors care for more than just back pain, many patients visit chiropractors looking for relief from this pervasive condition. In fact, 31 million Americans experience low-back pain at any given time.(1)

A few interesting facts about back pain:

- One-half of all working Americans admit to having back pain symptoms each year.(2)
- Back pain is one of the most common reasons for missed work. In fact, back pain is the second most common reason for visits to the doctor's office, outnumbered only by upper- respiratory infections.
- Most cases of back pain are mechanical or non-organic—meaning they are not caused by serious conditions, such as inflammatory arthritis, infection, fracture or cancer.
- Americans spend at least \$50 billion each year on back pain—and that's just for the more easily identified costs.(3)
- Experts estimate that as many as 80% of the population will experience a back problem at some time in our lives.(4)

Even with these documented facts, I still meet people everywhere I go who have not tried a chiropractor for their spinal problems. It has been estimated that only about 10% of the population utilizes chiropractic care. This is mind boggling when you compare that to the above statement that 80% of us will have a back problem at some point in our lives.

When you add to the mix that, after an extensive study of all currently available care for low back problems, the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research—a federal government research organization— recommended that low back pain sufferers choose the most conservative care first. And it recommended spinal manipulation as the only safe and effective, drugless form of initial professional treatment for acute low back problems in adults.(6) You start to wonder why the utilization rates are not higher.

Well, there are quite a few reasons why, and I think by now I have heard them all. So I thought I would take the time in the next few editions of Chiropractic Corner to address some of the reasons why people DON'T seek chiropractic care. Hopefully, this

will dispel some of the myths surrounding chiropractic, and assist you in considering safe, effective, and all natural chiropractic care for you and your loved ones.

Today's reason for not seeing a chiropractor:

“Once you go to a chiropractor, you have to go forever.”

Response:

This is a statement I've heard from many people, and mostly all of them have heard this from someone else and have not experienced chiropractic care themselves. It has most likely been passed down over time by word of mouth. Of course it is absolutely not true! And state laws require medical professionals to give a treatment plan to each patient, a plan that the patient and doctor must agree upon before treatment begins. There are some people out there who actually believe that once you are “aligned” you must keep going back to get “re-aligned”. It is physiologically and biomechanically not true.

Yes, there are some chiropractors that encourage lifelong chiropractic care for every patient, regardless of condition, patient presentation, or age. This is their specific philosophy on health and life and how chiropractic works best. I believe each person deserves an individualized treatment plan according to their condition and personal needs and desires. These plans are usually categorized as:

- “Weekend Warriors” These patients typically only need to be patched up and put back out into the world. They are usually feeling and functioning great after a few treatments.
- Patients with more serious or involved acute injuries. These patients usually have hurt themselves in a car accident, or around the house, or doing something recreational, but they require more attention than a weekend warrior. Their plan is a little more involved, but it also has a definite end to it. Once these people are functioning and feeling great, they are released from care just as the weekend warriors are.
- Patients with complicated, chronic, or multifactorial injuries. These patients do require long term care to make a lasting change in their lives. But they too have a treatment plan that ends. I take extra time with these unusual and complicated cases, so a lot of follow up is required to ensure my work is maintained and effective.

In each of these instances the treatment plan is proposed by me to the patient, and must be agreed upon before treatment begins. No surprises, no “okay now come in once a month forever” statements at the end of the plan. Some patients are frustrated when they hear they have to come in twelve times, or 8 times, or whatever the plan is, but I am very adamant and confident in my treatment plans. They have been developed over time by doing peer research and through the experience of treating thousands of patients. I never recommend more than I think the patient needs, and any less is usually not as effective.

And yes, I do have quite a few patients who come in once a month, rain or shine, pain or no pain for their adjustment. They function better in their lives and feel better

being adjusted regularly. There is also a very small number of patients who actually require a monthly adjustment for a prolonged period of time in order to make a change in their condition. But it is rare.

I personally get adjusted regularly, and I believe it is extremely beneficial to my health. However, as a professional, I cannot force my personal beliefs upon my patients. I am here to meet YOUR health goals. And with a thorough history, complete examination, and my clinical and diagnostic expertise, I am confident that I can put together the best treatment plan for you.

If this was the issue keeping you from experiencing hands on, natural, drug-free care, are you now ready to try chiropractic?

Your Journey to Health & Healing,  
Bobby Maybee, DC

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