

Chiropractors use multiple methods to determine where to adjust

Question: How does a Chiropractor determine which vertebra to adjust each visit?

Answer: Chiropractors are trained in college through extensive clinical training how to determine where subluxations exist and how to correct them. A subluxation is when two vertebra move out of alignment creating an adverse response to the nerve root exiting in between those two vertebra. This irritation to the nerve root will cause a dysfunction to any tissue it innervates whether there is a symptomatic response or not. This is why you don't want to wait to get symptoms to get adjusted.

The average person knows the vertebral subluxation as a "pinched nerve" but it is much more involved than simplifying it to that. Any alteration in the balance of the central nervous system creates a multitude of influence on sensory and motor response, which in turn can cause havoc to the tissues it controls. Chiropractors are specialists in dealing with vertebral subluxations and their effects. The correction of the vertebral subluxation is what uniquely identifies and demarcates the specialty of the chiropractic health field.

Chiropractors determine where your subluxations are through multiple measures. I personally count on my palpation abilities as the primary means of determination. Through static and motion palpation we can feel restrictions in motion, muscle tension, blocked joint play or end point restrictions, and changes in temperature to each area or tissue. Patient response to palpation also assists by knowing where tenderness is elicited. Utilization of instrumentation that can

isolate these same changes in joint function is available to chiropractors also. There are sophisticated computerized devices that read temperature change, joint fixation, and asymmetry in muscles and nerve conduction. Cross checking with “hands on” and instrument diagnostics gives the doctor of chiropractic an excellent edge in determining the location of the subluxations. X-rays, CT Scans and MRI’s also give the chiropractor a visual map of the position of vertebra. We not only observe the positioning of individual vertebra but also get an overall impression of how the structural balance and weight bearing of all the joints in the body. It is true that all of the body is connected in some form or another.

Understanding where and how the subluxation is occurring at that moment assist the chiropractor in administering the correct and most effective adjustment. High-velocity, low-amplitude adjusting seems to be the modern approach to adjusting for chiropractors, whether it is with an instrument or with hands using minimal force with maximal benefit. Most treatments are pain free, quick, with immediate resolution of the subluxation. A follow up check with the same diagnostic tools to determine if the correction was made is always suggested.

There is no substitute for experience when it comes to chiropractic. A well-trained competent chiropractor is your best choice.

Quote of the week: *“The spirit, the will to win, and the will to excel are the things that endure. These qualities are so much more important than the events that occur.”* – Vince Lombardi