

Hyper-mobility and fixation of spinal joints are both unhealthy

Question: My Chiropractor told me my spine is unhealthy because it is too hyper-mobile. He also said it makes it difficult to adjust me. What is hyper-mobility and why would it be difficult to adjust the spine because of it?

Answer: Your Chiropractor is correct on both claims. Hyper-mobility of a spinal joint means the joint is moving beyond its normal ranges of motion and there is not a restriction at the end of its full range. Some patients, especially younger ones, naturally have excessive flexibility and hyper-mobility that is considered normal for their age and activity levels. When the mature spinal joints move past their restrictive end points abnormal wear and tear can occur to the joints themselves. When the movement is excessive muscles pull from their origin and insertion, which are usually bony, prominences naturally formed on the joints. The repetitive hyper-mobile movements upon the spinal joints can create irritation to the tendons (attachments from the muscle to bone) leading to tendonitis. Other forms of inflammation can occur around the spinal joints, including arthritis, and degeneration.

The reason it is difficult for your Chiropractor to administer an adjustment to the hyper-mobile joint is because it doesn't stay in alignment once corrected. Some successful approaches to dealing with this condition are to perform gentler low force adjustments that do not require putting the joint in motion during treatment. Also, educating the patient on how to strengthen their spine will sometimes help the muscles and joints.

Fixation of a joint is more common. This is also an unhealthy spinal condition. Restriction of motion to fibrotic adhesions, also known as scar tissue, reduces activity in the joint causing it to be stagnant. Without proper motion dead tissue from normal usage builds up, making it difficult for the body to filter out bad necrotic tissue and allow healthy minerals and vitamins to restore healing to the joints.

Chiropractic adjustments are exceptional in these cases because they allow the body to heal itself by restoring normal mobility leading to normal function.

Quote of the week: *“Do not ask people to do what you are not willing to do yourself.”* - Phillip McGraw