



# HOW TO CHOOSE YOUR NEXT WELLNESS CHIROPRACTOR

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Choosing a chiropractor is an important decision to make for you and your family. For many, understanding where to start can be difficult. This e-book is intended to help you get started. New patients seeking service in our office are either new to chiropractic care, new to the city, moved to a new area of the city or have decided to change where they receive their chiropractic care. Whether you choose our clinic or not, it's important to us that you have a fantastic experience in the clinic you chose.

## IN THIS BOOK, YOU WILL LEARN:

- 1) What's the idea behind chiropractic?
- 2) What to expect from your chiropractor?
- 3) What are your chiropractor's qualifications
- 4) Questions to ask your chiropractor

## CHAPTER 1 – CHIROPRACTORS EH?

### **What's the idea behind Chiropractic?**

As a human being, you are born with the innate ability to be self healing and self regulating. Your innate bodily functions are controlled and regulated by your nervous system.

Your nervous system is your brain, your spinal cord and the nerves (including receptors) that go from your spinal cord to all the muscles, organs and glands of your body. Your spine protects your nervous system and allows your nervous system to communicate with the rest of your body.

Doctors of Chiropractic help their patients by identifying subluxations within their skeletal system. Subluxations? This word describes joint restrictions as well as the impact the joint restrictions have on your nervous system. Since your nervous system controls and coordinates all of your body's functions, health problems may arise when subluxations persist.

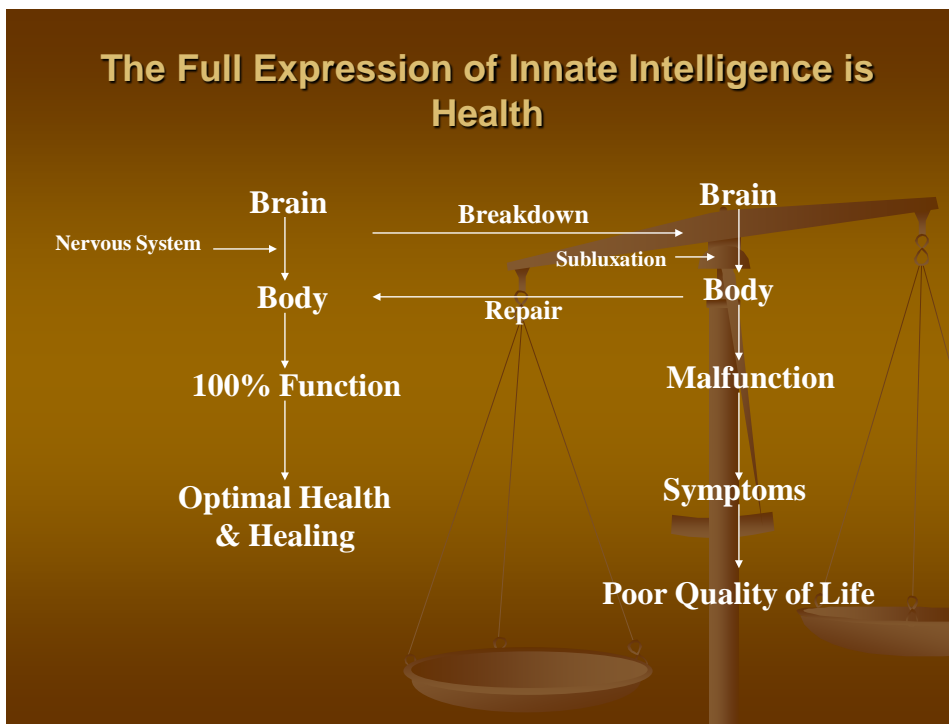
### **Health problems that may arise:**

- Chronic or acute pain/discomfort
- Strains and sprains
- Injury from repetitive use

- Limited range of motion in the back, shoulder, neck or limbs
- Poor Sleep Patterns
- Inconsistent energy levels
- Irritability

## What causes subluxations?

Simply put, STRESS. Specifically, the combination of physical, chemical and emotion stress has the potential to cause your nervous system (and skeletal system) to stop working efficiently and effectively for you. When you are unable to manage your sources of stress, different problems may arise.



Often, when we think of stress, we think of issues related to love or money. The fact is stress has 3 forms; they are physical stress, chemical stress and emotional stress.

### **Physical Stress**

- poor posture
- prolonged sitting or standing
- sedentary lifestyle
- intense physical activity (e.g. weight lifting, running)
- motor vehicle accidents
- repetitious work
- sleeping in incorrect positions (sleeping on back and side best)

### **Chemical Stress**

- poor diet
- dehydration
- environmental pollution
- prolonged drug use
- smoking
- pesticides

### **Emotional Stress**

- family
- career
- money
- recent move
- relationships
- internalized feelings



## **How does a Wellness Chiropractor help?**

Wellness Chiropractors are trained to identify the cause of your problem. Wellness chiropractors understand that a combination of physical, chemical and emotional stress can cause your nervous system to stop working the way nature intended. So, in order to improve the effects that a subluxation has on your nervous system, your wellness chiropractor will likely recommend a combination of *adjustments* and *lifestyle modifications*. We will discuss adjustments in the next section. Lifestyle modifications may include making changes to daily nutrition or other daily habits including exercise. Wellness Chiropractors help your body begin the process of healing itself. Wellness chiropractic care provides you an opportunity to maintain your health naturally.

## **What is a chiropractic adjustment?**

The chiropractic adjustment is a non-invasive procedure consisting of a precise directed movement to help relieve pain, discomfort, and restore joint range of motion. Restoring joint range of motion allows your nervous system to communicate with your body efficiently and effectively.

The chiropractic adjustment is typically delivered by hand. Instrument guided adjustments are also common place and available at many offices.

Sometimes chiropractors will also use other therapies like massage, heat, laser and ultrasound. A chiropractor does not prescribe drugs or perform surgery but may make a referral to another medical specialist for such treatment when appropriate.

### **What tools or therapies will a chiropractor use?**

- Graston Technique ®
- Active Release Techniques ® (ART)
- Acupuncture
- Shockwave Therapy
- Ice and Heat Therapy
- Soft Tissue Manipulation
- Ultrasound Therapy
- Massage Therapy
- Active Isolated Stretching

## CHAPTER 2 – WHAT TO EXPECT

You may not be a candidate for chiropractic care. In order to determine whether you are a candidate, you should expect your chiropractor to perform an initial consultation and assessment before you are treated.

During your consultation you will be asked to share information about your present health, your past health history (such as any injury or surgery, medications you are taking) and your family health history. Your wellness chiropractor will want to also understand how you eat, how you sleep and other lifestyle habits such as exercise.

You should expect your first visit to take longer than following visits due to your consultation and assessment to understand your case.

You should expect a number of tests and observations to be performed for a complete and comprehensive assessment. Your assessment may include posture, range of motion, reflexes, and other orthopaedic and neurologic tests. Your chiropractor may also order x-rays or other imaging tests to better understand and diagnose your case. A complete examination is important in order to identify whether chiropractic would be beneficial and safe for you.

You should expect your chiropractor to speak with you about your diagnosis and treatment plan before you

receive treatment/adjustments. This might happen on the first or second visit depending upon your case details.



## CHAPTER 3 – WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BE A CHIROPRACTOR?

### **Chiropractic education**

In Canada, doctors of chiropractic must complete a minimum of seven years of post-secondary education. This includes a four-year academic program at an accredited chiropractic college. In addition to classroom hours, chiropractic students treat patients in a supervised clinic setting during their final two years of education.

### **To be a chiropractor in Alberta**

Doctors must successfully pass national board exams and maintain professional competency through approved seminars and courses.

### **Chiropractic regulation in Alberta**

[http://www.albertachiro.com/site/what\\_is\\_regulation](http://www.albertachiro.com/site/what_is_regulation)

Chiropractic is a regulated health care profession. Being regulated means that chiropractors in Alberta must obey all legislative requirements set by the government for all health care providers. Other health care providers that are regulated include nurses, dentists, medical doctors and optometrists.

In Alberta, the Health Professions Act ensures all regulated health care providers:

- are educated and trained properly
- practice within a defined scope of practice
- adhere to strict Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics
- hold liability protection/coverage
- meet competency standards
- are accountable to a regulatory organization.

In Alberta, the regulatory organization is the Alberta College and Association of Chiropractors (ACAC).

The ACAC is entrusted with enforcing the requirements set by government for all chiropractors. To be a chiropractor in Alberta, you must be a member, in good standing, with the ACAC.

When you see a chiropractor in Alberta you can feel secure knowing that you are being treated by a competent, legislatively recognized, health care provider.

## CHAPTER 4 - QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CHIROPRACTOR

Many of these questions may be able to be answered by the clinic's administrative staff when you contact an office.

### **What treatments do you provide?**

It is important to understand how your chiropractor provides care to their patients. There are many techniques practiced by chiropractors. Being comfortable with your chiropractor's technique is gained by open and honest questions and answers.

### **How do you determine how many and what treatments I may need?**

Improving the health and functioning of your spine and nervous system may take time. It is important to understand how your chiropractor develops treatment plans for patients. This understanding helps you to participate fully in your recovery and health maintenance.

### **How long are chiropractic appointments?**

The length of your visits typically depends on your chiropractors practice style and technique. It will be important to understand your time commitment for certain appointments. As your first visit may take longer than other appointments, you want to ensure that you

have the appropriate time available for your appointment.

## **What are your financial policies?**

It will be important to understand how billing works in your chiropractor's office.

### *Common questions regarding financial policy*

- a) Do you accept insurance or provide direct billing?
- b) What forms of payment do you accept?
- c) Will you be billed at the end of every appointment or are treatment packages available? *Note: In the case of pre-paid care: it is stated in the Chiropractic Patient Charter of Rights that you are to receive a refund of any fees paid in advance for care you have not claimed within seven days of a formal request.*
- d) Will your treatment visits be a fixed price, or will the price vary depending on the type of treatment given?

## BEFORE YOU GO

Thank you for taking the time to review this e-book. I hope that you have found the information useful to aid in your search for your next wellness chiropractor.

Whether you choose our clinic or not, it's important to us that you have a fantastic experience in the clinic you chose.

*Dr. Kent Ferguson*

Dr. Kent Ferguson and the Oliver Chiropractic Wellness Clinic Team

<http://www.ocwc.ca>