

## Complementing Your Health WITH CHIROPRACTIC

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plans and  
Medicare**

**I**n the last 18 years, there has been considerable attention being paid to what are called “complementary and alternative medicines (CAM).” This attention came, at least in part, following the realization that a significant portion of the American public is using at least one type of alternative health care. The recognition of the frequency of use in turn led the U.S. Government to open the Office of Alternative Medicine (OAM) in the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in 1991 whose purpose was to study the efficacy of these therapies. Seven years later, the OAM was upgraded in NIH to become the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM).

Among the many CAM modalities that receive funding from NCCAM is chiropractic. Although chiropractic has long conducted research on the efficacy of treatments, raising the funds for such research within the profession was the responsibility of the Foundation for Chiropractic Education and Research (FCER). Chiropractic is also the largest organized CAM, since it is regulated in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico through licensing boards, examinations and continuing educational requirements.

In addition, chiropractic is one of the few CAM treatments that is covered by most health insurance plans and Medicare.

If you are new to chiropractic and/or are considering seeking chiropractic treatment, a basic understanding of what to expect may increase your comfort level, your participation, and possibly even improve the outcomes by making your expectations of care realistic.

### **Is Chiropractic “Alternative” or “Complementary?”**

In some ways it is misleading to call chiropractic “alternative” care. Alternative implies that you must choose one form of care (chiropractic) over another (allopathic). Many chiropractors would not agree with this, preferring the term “complementary care,” since other methods of care have their role and purpose. One of the differences between chiropractic and allopathic health care is the difference in their approach used by each profession: the chiropractor works with you to prevent and treat your condition, through spinal manipulation, nutritional guidance, exercise instruction, etc.; the medical doctor generally practices the treatment of disease using drugs, etc.

The Doctor of Chiropractic is not only trained to prevent disease, but is also educated and licensed to diagnose, with a special focus on problems concerning muscles, joints, and bones – collectively referred to as musculoskeletal. Your chiropractor will know which conditions are best suited for chiropractic care and which would be better treated by another type of health care provider. The goal of the

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## The Momentary Relationship Between Stress and Headaches in Adolescent Girls

The objective of this study was to compare the relationship between repeated momentary reports of stress and headaches in female adolescents with varying degrees of headache frequency. Headaches are the most common form of pain reported by adolescents affecting more than a third of all adolescents. High levels of stress during adolescence may predispose an adolescent to experience headaches in adulthood. Randomized, momentary data collection of stress and headaches provides the most accurate data regarding the adolescent experience of these variables. The research methodology, ecological momentary assessment, is a valid approach to better understand the relationship between stress and headaches in adolescence. Data were obtained by each participant's use of an electronic diary (ED), which captured repeated momentary reports of perceived stress, head pain, and stress-related symptoms in female adolescents with varying degrees of recurrent headache. Seven times per day for the 21-day study period, teen girls responded to ED questions about their current stress levels, head pain, and stress-related symptoms. Based on participants' momentary reports of headaches, Low Headache, Moderate Headache, and Chronic Headache groups were created. General estimating equation models were used to analyze the relationship between momentary variables as well as the lag effect between stress and head pain. The result was thirty-one participants, aged 14-18 years, completed 2841 randomized ED reports and reported 674 occurrences of headache. The Chronic Headache and Moderate Headache groups reported significantly increased levels of stress, head pain, and headaches. The relationship between momentary stress and head pain was significantly strong both within and across participants. The strength of this relationship increased with increased headache activity. A significant lag effect was found between stress and headaches; however, the effect of depression as a moderator of the stress and headache relationship remains unclear. Björling EA. *Headache*. 2009 April 6.

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chiropractor is your health – and he or she will refer you to the appropriate health care professional who could best accomplish that goal.

For some conditions, chiropractic has reached heights unheard of by other complementary health care groups. In the treatment of back pain, in particular, chiropractic has been recognized as an

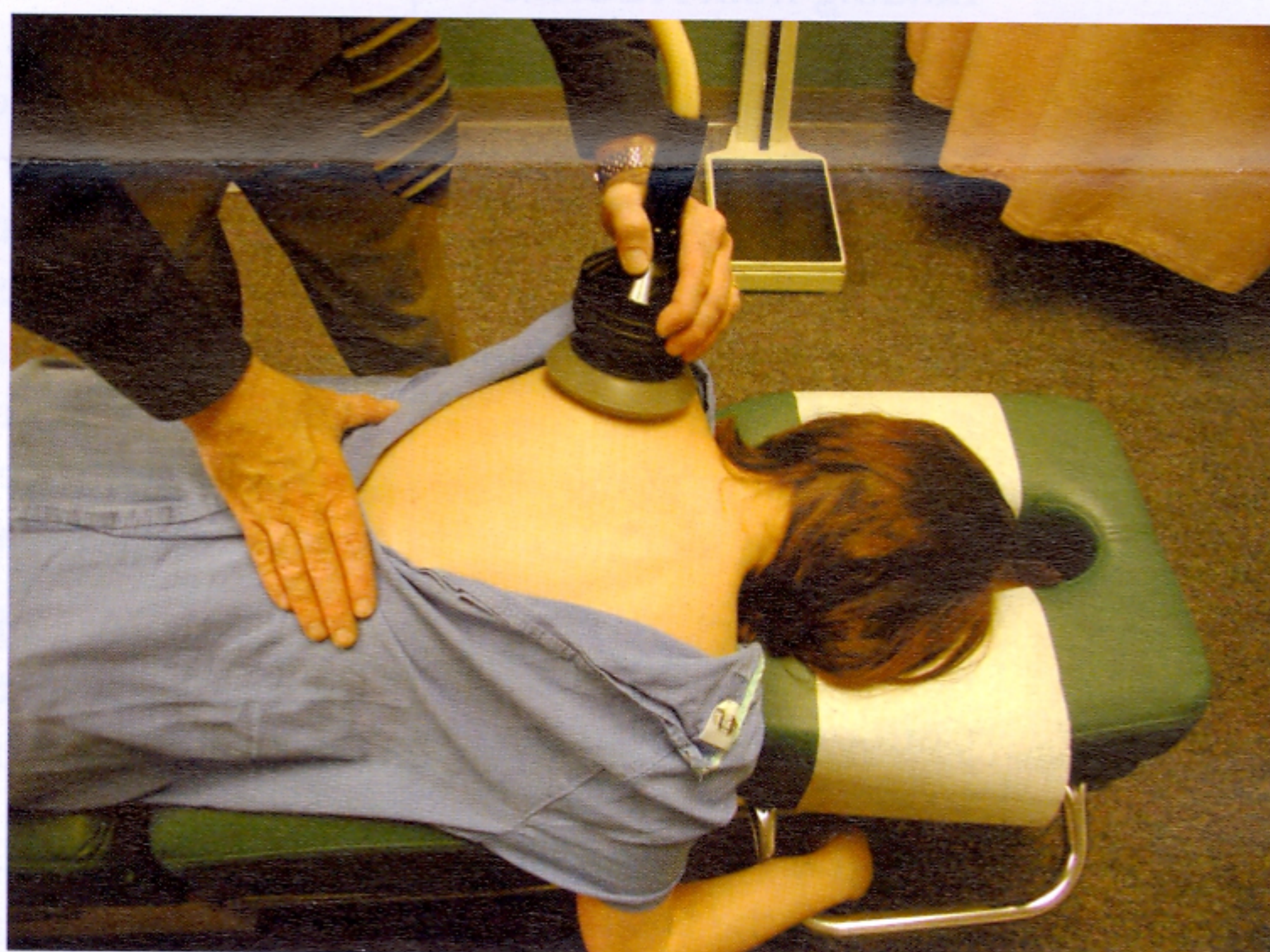
effective mainstream health care option by governments, medical organizations, and insurance companies.

### What Does Chiropractic Care Include?

Chiropractic is a form of health care that is drugless, non-invasive, and which actively promotes health. You will find that your Doctor of Chiropractic intends to be your *partner* in your health, not just the

administrator of care. In beginning this partnership, your chiropractor will take a complete health history, which will include your past health, as well as your current diet, exercise level, occupation, and any other information deemed important and necessary. He or she will also take the time to listen to your concerns and will answer any questions you have (this can occur at any time during any visit – if you think of a question, ask it!). A careful physical examination is also performed, which, depending on your specific case, may include palpation

## Illustrated Healthways



**In some instances, massage may be delivered mechanically. The method shown here is called G5 Massage. As with manipulation, the area to be massaged may differ from the location in this photograph.**

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(examination by touch), diagnostic imaging (if clinically necessary), and range of motion, strength, neurological, laboratory, and/or orthopedic tests.

Chiropractic treatment is often identified with the spinal adjustment or manipulation. This procedure is precise pressure applied at specific points that are determined by the chiropractor, and is usually (but not always) performed manually. Adjustments may be applied to soft tissues and other joints, as well as the spine. The purpose of the adjustment is to improve function and relieve pain and inflammation.

Chiropractic care may also incorporate physical agents such as ultrasound, electric muscle stimulation, massage, heat or ice applications, traction, laser, and others. Counseling on correct postures, a suitable exercise program, diet and nutrition, stress reduction, and other lifestyle modifications may also be added to your care, if necessary. Your active participation in your health is primary for optimal effectiveness of care. Follow all advice provided by your Doctor of Chiropractic and ask questions when you have them. Understanding *why* you are advised to do something will greatly increase the likelihood that you will comply.

### **Using the Partnership to Your Best Advantage**

The ultimate goal of chiropractic care is to keep you in the best possible health. A large part of this will require your participation. No amount of chiropractic (or any type of health care for that matter) is going to keep you 100 percent healthy if you are doing little in your own life to lead a healthful lifestyle. If your chiropractor notices weaknesses in your health and makes suggestions for improvement, it is in your best interest to follow all recommendations. It is also in your best interest to be truthful with all health care providers. And when in doubt – ASK!



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## **News & Views**

### **Teen Smokers Have Low Quit Rates: Study**

Only about 1 in 10 U.S. high school students who smoke are successful when they try to quit. It found that 60.9 percent of high school students who ever smoked cigarettes daily tried to kick the habit, but only 12.2 percent were successful. Sex or race ethnicity wasn't associated with success, but more Grade 9 student smokers were successful (22.9 percent) than those in Grade 10 (10.7 percent), Grade 11 (8.8 percent) and Grade 12 (10 percent). The researchers said their findings highlight the need to fully implement and sustain comprehensive tobacco prevention and control programs that have been proven to reduce smoking among youth, including tobacco use prevention programs in schools. (*HealthyDayNews*. April 30, 2009)

### **Gum Chewing May Cut Craving for Snacks**

You might be able to cut down on snacking by chewing more sugarless gum. During an experiment, people were offered a variety of snacks three hours after a standard lunch and were told they could eat as much of the snacks as they desired. One afternoon the participants also chewed sugarless gum for 15 minutes each hour in the period between lunch and snack time. The other afternoon, gum-chewing was not allowed during that time. The researchers found that people ate fewer snacks and shaved 40 calories off their in-between meal consumption when they chewed gum, compared with their snack consumption when they didn't chew gum. The participants – 115 men and women 18 to 54 years old, all regular gum-chewers – said that they generally didn't feel as hungry or as desirous of a sweet treat after chewing the gum. They also reported having good energy throughout the afternoon and feeling less drowsy at mid-afternoon snack time than they did on an afternoon when they chewed no gum. (*HealthyDay News*. April 19, 2009)

### **Sleep Affects Children's Behavior: Study**

Getting enough sleep may help reduce hyperactivity and bad behavior among children, suggests a new study. Finnish researchers studied 280 healthy children, ages 7 and 8, and found that those who got an average of less than 7.7 hours of sleep per night had higher scores on tests of hyperactivity and impulsive behavior. They also had more symptoms of attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), *BBC News* reported. "We were able to show that short sleep duration and sleeping difficulties are related to behavioral symptoms of ADHD," said study leader Dr. Juulia Paavonen. "The findings suggest that maintaining adequate sleep schedules among children is likely to be important in preventing behavioral symptoms." Paavonen also said inadequate sleep may increase "some of the behavioral problems that have been seen in children with attention deficit disorders," *BBC News* reported. (*HealthyDay News*. April 28, 2009)



## Q: *How quickly will I notice improvement in my symptoms while receiving chiropractic care?*

**A:** All people recover from injuries or chronic conditions differently. Symptoms may diminish, become intermittent, or change in pattern, type, or character. It is common to experience pain and other uncomfortable sensations during recovery. Since chiropractic care uses non-drug and non-surgical approaches, less effort is made to mask symptoms and more attention is placed on understanding what the symptoms are trying to tell you about your condition.

It is also normal to become impatient with recovery because of the common desire to have the condition go away faster than your body is able to heal. A substantial part of this feeling comes from the general acceptance of taking medications to mask symptoms and, therefore, a belief that when the pain is gone, so is the problem. Reassurance from your chiropractor that you are continuing to recover is important during these times.

It is possible to delay recovery or aggravate your condition through daily habits or activities. Poor postures, repetitious movements, and stress may interfere with your recovery. Your Doctor of Chiropractic can help you discover these problems only if he or she knows your concerns. Careful attention to your symptoms and open communication with the chiropractor will help assure the best and fastest recovery.

It is important to ask your Doctor of Chiropractic any questions you may have so that he or she can determine if what you are experiencing indicates expected symptomatic changes during recovery, a need for a change in treatment procedures, or a need for re-evaluation, second opinion, or referral.

GOOD NEWS  
SHOULD BE SHARED.  
PASS THIS NEWSLETTER  
ON TO A FRIEND.

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