



Chiropractic Miracles

Delivering You the Best Word in Wellness and Natural Health Care

Dr. Atwell 's Breakthrough Patient Newsletter...

Atwell Family Chiropractic and Wellness
1811 Virginia Ave. Harrisonburg, VA 22802
Tel: (540) 442-8294 / Fax: (540) 442-8670
www.getwellwithatwell.com

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Dear Patient and Friend,

Most people know that chiropractors often help people with painful problems – back pain, neck pain, headaches, shoulder and knee pain, and so on. Pretty much every kind of painful condition has gotten better with the help of chiropractic adjustments. It's what most people know about chiropractors – if you want to get relief from your pain, see a chiropractor.

But most people could benefit from seeing a chiropractor, even before they hurt. After all, many of the people who visit chiropractors for back pain didn't do anything in particular to injure themselves, they just woke up one day feeling bad, or it came on slowly and kept getting worse – doesn't it make sense that the problem may have started before the pain began?

Most of the time, the pain is not the problem – the pain tells you that you have a problem. It's like a fire alarm ringing when the fire is burning. The alarm isn't the problem, it tells you that you have a problem. If you just shut off the alarm, the fire will take your house. Yes, you have to shut off the alarm, but then you have to put out the fire.

It's the same thing with your symptoms. The pain tells you something is wrong – your brain and nerve system being stressed, or some habit coming back to bite you. Yes, your chiropractor will help you feel better as soon as possible, but he or she also needs to address the underlying cause of the pain.

So who needs to go to a chiropractor? Everyone should get a check-up, at least once or twice a year, to be sure there are no problems developing. A clean bill of health means your best chance at feeling good, with your body working well. Don't wait till it hurts – get a check-up.

Why Is Good Posture Important?

Most of us remember at some point in our childhood having a parent, teacher or relative tell us to “stand up straight.” Good posture looks better and is thought to be desirable, but why is it important in the first place?

The American Posture Institute defines posture as “the position in which you hold your body upright against gravity while standing, sitting or lying down.”

They go on to say, “Posture is determined by the alignment of the spine. When your posture is distorted it causes stress to the spinal cord and the spinal nerves, interfering with the messages being sent from the brain to the body. Uncorrected postural distortions cause early degeneration of your spine, leading to common symptoms such as back pain, neck pain, headaches, sciatica, and fatigue.”

In other words, standing or sitting up straight isn't only about a more pleasing appearance, it also has a significant impact on your health.

Your body depends on your brain to work well. Your brain is like a supercomputer that runs the organs, muscles and other body parts, so you can move, breathe, digest your food, and do all the things that make you, you.

Your brain connects with your body through wires called nerves. The network of nerves is so extensive, it reaches virtually everywhere in your body, so your brain always knows what's going on, and can send some guidance when called for.

So, when the American Posture Institute says that postural distortion causes stress to the nerves, what they're really saying is that if your spine is out of alignment, it can injure the wires that go from your brain to your body parts.

This explains why posture problems can lead to painful conditions like back pain, neck pain and headaches – because when the spine is out of position, it hurts the nerves, and the body goes into “red alert” because the brain can't keep control. Not only does this stress the nerves in the area, it hurts the brain too.

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This is why posture is so very important, in young and old. Poor posture means poor alignment, and poor alignment means injury to your nerves and brain.

What can you do to improve your posture? Your body is trying to keep you upright against the force of gravity, the constant downward pull of the earth. Your brain tells your muscles to hold your spine and your limbs where you'll maintain your stability with the least wear and tear.

So, the first thing you can do to improve your posture is become aware of when you are slouching or off-center, and consciously bring yourself back to a straight and balanced position. To some degree, posture is a habit, and you can work at training yourself to stand comfortably straight most of the time.

You might even want to partner with a "posture buddy" so you can remind each other to correct your posture if you backslide. We all need all the help we can get.

But sometimes, there's a physical reason why good posture is difficult, and this is where you can consult your neighborhood spinal expert, your chiropractor.

Your chiropractor understands how your spinal alignment affects your brain and nerves, and can advise you on the right course of action to have the healthiest spine and the best posture possible.

If you have discomfort, don't wait, your body is trying to tell you something, get to your doctor of chiropractic right away. But even if you feel okay, stand in front of a mirror, and look at your posture -- be honest, could it be better?

Take responsibility to keep yourself in good spinal health, both through watching and correcting your posture, and by getting periodic check-ups with your chiropractor. You'll look better, feel better, and your brain and body will work better, so you have less pain and stress, and a better overall quality of life.

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Check In On Your Resolutions

Right about this time of year, many people are looking back over their best New Year intentions about health habits. If you are still on target, good for you! But if you're like so many of us have who have gotten off course, here are four pointers to help you right the ship:

1. Think about why you wanted to make the change in the first place.

Knowing why something is important will give you power to follow through, even if you have to keep reminding yourself in the beginning. Why did you want to exercise, to eat better, to worry less, to quit smoking, to get adjusted regularly? When you know why, you will comply.

2. Imagine if you made the change you want to make – what would you be like? What would be different? How would it be better? What would you gain? What wouldn't you lose? Get clear about what you would look like, feel like, be like if you made the change you wanted to make.

3. What's the first step you can take in the right direction? Maybe it's hard to do everything all at once, but could you take a single step? Eat that way once. Do that exercise once. Then you can decide what to do, after doing it once. If you do it again, that would make twice, and you have the beginning of a habit. Build it a brick at a time.

4. If you stumble, get back up quickly. Everyone messes up – but not everyone keeps going forward. If you get up one more time than you are knocked down, you will get to your goal.

Whether you want to lose weight, get in shape, quit a bad habit or start a good one, use this simple and magical formula – know why, imagine your success, get started, and go until. Over time, you'll get to where you want to be!

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