

Chiropractic Services Beyond Adjustments

The focus on spinal adjustment is what makes doctors of chiropractic unique in their approach to treating patients with spinal complaints. The chiropractic adjustment, however, may not be the only procedure a chiropractor may employ in managing a patient's care.

COMMON FORMS OF CHIROPRACTIC THERAPY

✓ **Heat and cold.** Chiropractors may alternate between heat and ice therapy to help patients treat back pain. Ice packs may be used to numb the back for a 10 to 15 minute period and then switched with a heating pad, heat wrap or hot water bottle to restore blood flow to the area and promote faster healing.

✓ **Exercise.** Chiropractors may provide patients with instructions for an exercise program focusing on stretching and strengthening the back.

✓ **Massage.** Chiropractors may massage the soft tissues to improve circulation, reduce swelling and inflammation associated with the back pain, and encourage quicker healing.

✓ **Dietary management.** Many chiropractors will provide patients with tips on how an improved diet may help with back pain, and some may recommend dietary supplements after spinal manipulation.

✓ **Ultrasound.** With ultrasound, sound waves create deep heat therapy that is applied to the soft tissues and joints. Basically micro-massaging the soft tissues and joints, ultrasound therapy can not only help reduce back pain, stiffness, and spasms, but increase blood flow and accelerate the healing process.

✓ **Diathermy.** A form of shortwave, electro-magnetic therapy that passes the softer tissues and provides heat to denser tissues, diathermy relaxes the muscles and connective tissues, decreases muscle spasms, and accelerates the healing process by increasing circulation. In chiropractic treatment utilizing diathermy, the treated area will typically feel pleasantly warm.

✓ **Hydrotherapy.** Using water and varying its temperature and pressure via hot baths, whirlpools, saunas or wraps, hydrotherapy focuses on the body's reaction to hot and cold stimuli. In chiropractic, hydrotherapy

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Qualifications

Graduated From: Palmer College of Chiropractic

Years in Practice: 29

Treatments

- Chiropractic Adjustments
- Ultrasound
- EMS
- Deep Tissue Massage
- Spinal Axial Decompression
- Orthotics
- Trigger Point Therapy

"Do what you do so well that people would want to come back and tell others." ~ Walt Disney

may be used to reduce the sensitivity of back pain through cold stimuli that numb the pain and the use of hot stimuli to promote blood flow and faster healing.

✓ **Electrical muscle stimulation.**

During this chiropractic therapy, electrodes are placed on the skin that send light electrical pulses to different areas of the body with the purpose of reducing inflammation, curtailing muscle spasms and relieving back pain.

✓ **Transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulators (TENS).**

The most common form of electrical stimulation, TENS units feature electrodes that are placed over the painful area with the user having the power to control the intensity of electrical stimulation. It is believed that TENS help block the transmission of pain signals along the nerves and also **release the body's natural painkillers, endorphins.**

✓ **Traction.** A chiropractic traction massage may include the patient lying face up as a system of rollers move about the back, all the while stretching and massaging the muscles in the back. Chiropractors may use other

traction devices that stretch the spine, decompress the discs and reduce the pressure on the nerve roots (a procedure known as non-surgical spinal decompression).

✓ **Infrared radiation.** In chiropractic, a thermal camera may be used to image colored hues indicating the blood flow in the back. For example, red hues would indicate higher IR radiation and more blood flow in the back. Infrared radiation may be used by chiropractors to differentiate normal temperature changes from abnormal differences and to assess underlying conditions that are causing back pain.

✓ **Cold laser therapy.** With cold laser therapy, particles of energy are carried in a laser and absorbed by the **cell membrane's photo receptors** after penetrating the skin surface. The cells and tissues then convert this light energy into biochemical energy, fueling a biological process that is believed to decrease swelling, reduce back pain and inflammation, and improve circulation.

✓ **Ergonomics.** During the course of chiropractic care, the chiropractor may

recommend some modification such as a work station change that is applied at home and/or at work. The success or failure of obtaining patient satisfying outcome may be directly related to applying an ergonomic/job-related modification or a hobby-related irritating activity. For more information see our Ergonomics Health Center.

✓ **Pelvic stabilization.** When leg-length deficiency, flat feet and/or subtalar instability are present, the chiropractor may place a small heel lift in the shoe on the short leg side and/or prescribe corrective arch supports to help stabilize the pelvis.

✓ **Patient education.** A chiropractor may advise a variety of lifestyle modifications, including diet and nutritional programs, self-care and coping strategies, to the patient experiencing lower back pain.

Visit <http://www.spine-health.com/treatment/chiropractic/chiropractic-services-beyond-adjustments> for more information on this topic.

Talk to Dr. Cafagna about specific questions related to your unique health situation.

**Contact Dr. Cafagna
to learn more or schedule an appointment**

760-410-2373

<http://www.spine-health.com/doctor/chiropractor/mark-cafagna-san-marcos-ca>