

# BLOOD PRESSURE

## **Latest findings show Chiropractic can help reduce blood pressure**

Findings recently released by the Chiropractors' association of Australia indicate there is a non-drug alternative that can lower abnormal blood pressure in healthy bodies by 7.8% – 13%.

The latest findings published in the Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics Vol, 24, No.2, by Dr Gary Knutson DC., show chiropractic adjustments to the upper neck can lower systolic blood pressure almost immediately.

According to Dr Laurie Tassell, National Spokesperson for the Chiropractors' Association of Australia, a chiropractic pilot study involving 80 people found there is a relationship between the upper neck vertebrae and the body's natural blood pressure control reflexes.

"With gentle chiropractic adjustment to the upper neck, blood pressure can be lowered, with good results measured for older patients in particular," he said. Traditionally the causes of high blood pressure, according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, have been linked to excess weight, alcohol consumption, physical inactivity, dietary salt intake, and nutrition patterns with low intake of fruit and vegetables coupled with a high intake of saturated fat. Data from the 1999-2000 study of general practice activity in Australia shows that high blood pressure is the most common problem managed by general practitioners, accounting for 6% of all problems managed.

"This is where the results of our finding are significant, because chiropractic spinal adjustments may be able to reduce a patient's blood pressure and in conjunction with visits to their local GP, the level of prescribed drugs may be significantly reduced," said Dr Tassell.

A report by the Australian Diabetes, Obesity and Lifestyle Study found that in 1999-2000, more than 3.6 million Australians over the age of 25 had high blood pressure, which equates to 31% of men and 26% of women.

"These chiropractic research findings and the affect of high blood pressure on the Australian population provide a good foundation to recommend further studies involving larger groups for more detailed testing," said Dr Tassell.

Further to this the Chiropractors' Association of Australia hope to conduct further studies to identify direct connections between joint problems and muscle tension, and its effects on the nerve reflexes.

"The benefit of chiropractic care is that it is a drugless, painless, and surgically free approach to good health, with the goal of helping allow the body to function and repair itself," said Dr Tassell.

### **Chiropractic management of a hypertensive patient: a case study. Plaughter G. Bachman TR.**

A case study of a 38 year old male presented with a complaint of hypertension of 14 years duration and side effects of medication (Minipress and Corgard) which included bloating sensations, depression, fatigue, and impotency. Chiropractic analysis revealed vertebral subluxation complex at the levels of Cervical 6-7, Thoracic 3-4, and 7-8.

After three visits the patient's M.D. stopped the Minipress and reduced the Corgard. After six adjustments Corgard was reduced again. All medications were stopped after seven adjustments. Medication side effects had abated as well.

After 18 months, the patient's blood pressure remained at normal levels.

High blood pressure is something many people suffer from and yet, in most cases the cause is unknown.

Case studies showing changes in blood pressure after chiropractic care are becoming more abundant. "While results cannot be predicted for a particular hypertensive patient, a therapeutic trial of chiropractic co-management would seem to be warranted, especially when dysfunction is identified in relevant spinal areas." Proper lifestyle advice and medical care should be concurrent with a regime of chiropractic adjustments. From Weber M. and Masarsky C, Eds. Neurological Fitness Vol.2 No.3 April 1993.

### **The effect of cranial adjusting on hypertension: a case report. Connelly DM, Rasmussen SA Chiropractic Technique, May 1998; 10(2):75-78.**

This paper describes the experiences of three hypertensive patients who underwent chiropractic sacro-occipital cranial technique.

One was a 73 year-old woman with a blood pressure of 170/100. Immediately following chiropractic care it was 120/78 and over the next few months measured 140/72.

The second patient was a 41 year-old woman with a blood pressure of 170/95. With cranial care it dropped to an average of 147/90. She was instructed to remove her dental plate at night and a couple of times during the day. With these changes, her blood pressure dropped to 130/90.

The third patient was a 74 year-old male on blood pressure medication who presented a blood pressure of 140/100. After a series of adjustments he was told by his M.D.s to reduce and eliminate medications. He presented with a blood pressure of 130/80 on his last visit.

**Hypertension and the atlas subluxation complex. Goodman R. Chiropractic: J of Chiropractic Research and Clinical Investigation. Vol 8 No. 2, July 1992. Pp. 30-32.**

Six of eight patients under chiropractic experienced relief of symptoms and lowered blood pressure after chiropractic care. The blood pressures of two subjects remained unchanged or increased sometime during the test period. "Systolic pressure was lowered by an average of 27mm Hg, and the diastolic pressure by an average of 13mm Hg. In several subjects, other symptoms such as low back pain, thoracic tightness, headaches, and general malaise, diminished following the adjustments. Those subjects who were not on medication showed the greatest change."

**Preliminary study of blood pressure changes in normotensive subjects undergoing chiropractic care. McKnight ME, DeBoer KF, Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics, 1988; 11:261-266.**

Seventy-five people were tested after specific chiropractic cervical adjustments.

Both systolic and diastolic blood pressure decreased significantly in the adjusted group. No significant changes occurred in the control group.

In those with the highest pre-treatment blood pressures, the treatment effect was the greatest, indicating that the effectiveness in hypertensives may be even more significant.

**Effects of chiropractic treatment on blood pressure and anxiety: a randomized, controlled trial. Yates RG, Lamping DL, Abram NL, Wright C. Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics, 1988; 11(6):484-8.**

In this patient-blinded, assessor-blinded, placebo-controlled study, the authors state that the data “lend support to the hypothesis that chiropractic manipulation of the thoracic spine significantly reduces blood pressure in patients with elevated blood pressure.”

Both systolic and diastolic blood pressure decreased significantly in the adjusted group. Adjustments were delivered to segments T1 -T5 of the 21 patients in the group adjusted. No significant changes occurred in the placebo or control groups.

**The management of hypertensive disease: a review of spinal manipulation and the efficacy of conservative therapeutics. Crawford JP, Hickson GS, Wiles MR. Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics, 1986; 9:27-32**

From the abstract:

Hypertension may be regarded as a prime condition warranting specialized care that includes proper education during the formative years, modification of dietary habits in conjunction with daily exercise regiment, and regular spinal maintenance, all of which are covered by modern chiropractic clinical practice.

**Evidence for a possible anti-hypertensive effect of basic technique apex contact adjusting. Dulgar G, Hill D, Sirucek A, Davis BP, ACA J of Chiropractic, 1980;14:97-102.**

A statistically significant drop in both systolic and diastolic blood pressure in normotensive (normal blood pressure) subjects was found under chiropractic care.

The authors write that spinal care “might offer a drugless means of lowering blood pressure in essential hypertensive patients.”

**The effects of upper cervical adjustment upon the normal physiology of the heart. Tran AT, Kirby JD. J Am. Chiropractic Association, 1977; 11/S: 58-62.**

Upper cervical adjustments were found to have a hypotensive effect.

**Blood pressure, results in 75 abnormal cases. Hood Robin P. Digest of Chiropractic Economics. May/June 1974**

This is a paper describing seventy-five patients with abnormal blood pressure in a two-year study on chiropractic care.

Thirty-eight of the patients were taking or had been taking prescribed drugs for hypertension and many still had high blood pressure even on the drugs.

Chiropractic care involved spinal adjustments using the Gonstead method of spinal care. The patient's lifestyles were also modified to eliminate refined and processed foods (including soft drinks), and encourage stomach-sleeping and the use of high pillows.

Results: Before care the average blood pressure of the 67 hypertensive patients was 163/93.8. After care it was 130.4/82. Before care the average blood pressure of the 8 hypotensive patients was 100/67.5, after care it was 114/76.3