

Safety of Chiropractic



Research on chiropractic care shows that it is safe¹ and effective² with high levels of patient satisfaction³

Chiropractic care has an enviable safety record compared to other options.^{1,4}

There must be some risk?

Virtually all forms of healthcare are associated with some risk.⁵ With the sort of manual or 'hands-on' procedures that chiropractors use in everyday practice, it's logical that there is at least some risk that on rare occasions some people may suffer from an adverse event after seeing their chiropractor.





What does the research show?

A number of researchers have reviewed published literature relating to the safety of chiropractic care.⁶⁻⁸ Because serious adverse events are so rare following chiropractic care, it's virtually impossible for researchers to accurately estimate how often they actually occur.⁶

What is more common with chiropractic care is that some people can feel a bit stiff and sore after they've been adjusted, but this usually goes away by itself.^{1, 6, 7} So, according to the best reviews of all the science literature on this topic, we know that being seriously hurt from seeing your chiropractor is extremely rare.^{4, 8, 9} In fact, the statistics tell us that you are about ten times more likely to be seriously injured driving to and from your chiropractor's office than you are from being seriously injured while seeing your chiropractor.¹⁰

Despite all of these studies showing how rare adverse events are with chiropractic care, there are still some people who are worried a chiropractic adjustment could cause a stroke. This has also been studied very carefully.^{8, 11} In two separate studies researchers looked at extremely large patient databases from insurance plans in Canada and America and compared over 2,600 patients who had

actually suffered from a stroke involving arteries in their neck and they compared them to people who hadn't had a stroke.^{8, 11} They looked to see whether the people who had suffered a stroke were more likely to have seen a chiropractor or a medical doctor before suffering from the stroke. These studies suggest that patients who suffer from a stroke after seeing a chiropractor probably went to see the chiropractor because they had neck pain or headaches caused by the early stages of the blood vessel damage that ultimately caused the stroke. It also means that there is no greater risk of suffering from a stroke if you choose to visit a chiropractor compared to a medical doctor.

The risks are so rare that they cannot accurately be estimated.^{5, 11} Like any healthcare intervention, some adverse events do of course occur with chiropractic care^{5, 6} and these adverse events are generally minor and go away by themselves^{5, 6} and don't take away from the high levels of patient satisfaction associated with chiropractic care.³

So, despite what some people think, chiropractic has an enviable safety record and you can rest assured that if you go see your chiropractor, you're in safe hands.

Disclaimer and References

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