Whiplash & Neck Injuries

What Is Whiplash?

Chiropractic has been a blessing to millions of people who have had whiplash injuries. What exactly is a whiplash injury and how does chiropractic help?

Whiplash is not a disease but a description of how an injury occurred. The spine, usually the head and neck, was unexpectedly thrown very quickly in one direction and then rebounded in the opposite direction. The head was “whipped around” on the neck usually front to back, but it can also happen from a side-to-side motion of the neck as well.1

Where’s The Damage?

The vast majority of whiplash sufferers have misaligned spinal bones (cervical vertebrae) and nerve, joint, ligament, tendon, muscle and disc stress, irritation or damage. Chiropractors have a special name to describe this type of condition—a subluxation, the most common source of pain and discomfort from whiplash injuries.2

What Is A Subluxation?

A whiplash injury is a dramatic example of one type of subluxation (nerve interference)—the kind produced by accident or trauma. Subluxations may also be caused by emotional stress and tension that slowly build up day-to-day—micro-trauma. Other causes of subluxations are poor posture, bad sleeping positions, weak muscles, poor diet and even dental work.3 A chiropractic examination often includes a discussion of your personal habits and any injuries, falls, accidents or situations which may contribute to subluxations.

References

Immediately after the accident you may feel some neck soreness or stiffness, perhaps accompanied by a headache. Later, pain and/or numbness, tingling or a pins-and-needles feeling may develop between the shoulder blades, in the arm, hand and/or fingers.

Depending on the nerves affected, you may have ear ringing, dizziness, hearing loss, eye pain, blurred vision, sensitivity to light, nasal problems, low back pain and even internal organ problems.4-6

Chiropractors educate on how to awaken your inner healer.

People like chiropractors because they approach health in a natural, safe, drug-free manner.

Chiropractors are the only professionals specially trained to locate and correct your subluxations.

**Whiplash Symptoms—Body & Mind**

An individual who has been in an accident should first make sure that there is no life-threatening emergency—broken bones, bleeding or hemorrhage, internal organ damage, serious contusions or abrasions, shock or other damage. This is the specialty of emergency medicine yet too many patients are released from medical care after an injury even though they are still not well. Although the X-rays, MRI or CT scans and other tests may have found “nothing,” the patient’s structural system has not been analyzed for subluxations. They may develop arthritis and disc problems years after the accident (and after the legal settlements) because a chiropractor was not consulted right away.

After the patient's condition has stabilized, it is essential that the accident victim’s spine be checked by a doctor of chiropractic for subluxations.10

**Chiropractic Care For Whiplash Victims**

In one study, 44 male and female patients (ages 13-67) with whiplash injuries were placed under chiropractic care. Their pain levels were significantly lower after 20 office visits.13

Chiropractic’s superiority was noted in a study published in a major medical journal when, after the authors interviewed 93 patients, they concluded: “Whiplash injuries are common. Chiropractic is the only proven effective treatment in chronic cases.”14

**In Conclusion**

Any accident may cause subluxations—structural misalignments and irritated or damaged nerves. If you’ve ever been involved in an accident, whiplash or otherwise, no matter how long ago, please see your doctor of chiropractic to ensure that you have really healed as completely as possible. Trauma or injury from many years ago may be responsible for seemingly unrelated health problems suffered today.

Muscles of the Neck & Head

Auto accidents are a common cause of whiplash injuries but not the only cause.