



Wellness News Network™

Your Source for Health & Wellness Information

Issue 3, April 2016

Chiropractic: A Manual Therapy for Chronic Asthma

Presented by: **Total Health Systems**

TotalHealthSystems.com

Introduction

Many chronic asthma sufferers have turned to chiropractic care to help treat or prevent asthma attacks or symptoms. Asthma is a chronic lung disease that involves inflammation and swelling in the lung's airways. The inflamed airways of an asthmatic are extremely sensitive and often react strongly to allergens and other irritants. With asthma, the muscles surrounding the airways become too tight - a situation known as bronchospasm. Asthma, notes the UC Davis Health System, is episodic, may be accompanied by sinus problems, is usually seasonal and may be reversible.¹

What *is* the role of chiropractic care in treating chronic or long-term, asthma? An article published on the Dynamic Chiropractic website describes a case study in which one young patient with asthma experienced a significant reduction in the frequency and intensity of asthma attacks with chiropractic care - a clinical outcome reported by many chiropractors and chiropractic patients.² In this edition of the Wellness News Network, we will take a closer look at the possible benefits of chiropractic care for asthma sufferers.

How Chiropractic Care May Help

As mentioned above, asthma is an abnormal constriction of the lung's airways. To understand how chiropractic care - spinal adjustments, specifically - may help treat asthma, it is important to understand why the lung's airways constrict. Airway constriction may be caused by many different factors, including a communication problem between the nerves and the bronchial muscles (i.e., the bands of muscle that surround your airways). It is thought by some in the chiropractic community that physical pressure on a spinal nerve (in the upper thoracic spine, or mid-back) may affect the nerve signal that controls bronchial muscle tone.

The idea is that by adjusting the spine and restoring normal spinal joint motion, any nerve interference that may be causing



QUESTION:

Airway constriction may be caused by lack of communication between the bronchial muscles and...

- A) air we breathe
- B) nerves
- C) lungs

ANSWER:

B) nerves

TRUE OR FALSE:

Some food additives can cause an asthma attack

ANSWER:

True

QUESTION:

Some natural asthma treatments to try are...

- A) improve air quality in the home
- B) eat foods rich in Omega-3 fatty acids
- C) use hypoallergenic bed linens
- D) all of the above

ANSWER:

D) all of the above

Presented by: Clinton Township (586) 228-0270
Washington (586) 781-0800

Chesterfield (586) 949-0123
St Clair Shores (586) 772-8560

bronchial constriction can be resolved and lung function restored. This is one theory in the chiropractic community of why spinal adjustments may help relieve asthma symptoms in chronic asthma sufferers.

What the Evidence Says

Research evidence into the effects of chiropractic care on chronic asthma are mixed. Some studies show favorable effects while others fail to draw any significant conclusions about the benefits of chiropractic care for this health problem.

One study, published in 2008 in the *Chiropractic Journal of Australia*, reports that a multi-modal chiropractic treatment approach may help reduce asthma-associated symptoms in selected cases.³ A review article, published in 2013 in the *Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics*, notes that the use of manual techniques (e.g., chiropractic care, osteopathic medicine, and massage) on children with respiratory diseases (including asthma) appears to be beneficial.⁴ Another review article, published in 2012 in the journal *Clinical Chiropractic*, states that chiropractic care may be a viable alternative care method for asthma sufferers.⁵

Still, there is some research evidence that fails to show significant benefits of chiropractic care for asthma.^{6,7} Many of these studies conclude that larger randomized controlled studies are required to examine the effects of chiropractic care and other manual therapies on asthma.

Other Helpful Natural Treatments

Chiropractic care is just one part of a comprehensive natural treatment approach to chronic asthma. According to the American Chiropractic Association, other

helpful measures include using air filters to improve the air quality in your home, avoiding sulfites and monosodium glutamate (MSG) in foods, eating foods that are rich in omega-3 fatty acids (e.g., fish or fish oil), supplementing your diet with vitamin C, covering your bedding (e.g., mattresses and pillows) with dust covers and using hypoallergenic bed linens to minimize your exposure to dust mites.⁸

Exercise-induced asthma - coughing, wheezing, or shortness of breath during or after exercise - is another form of the condition that may respond well to natural treatment approaches. If you suffer from this problem, your chiropractor can prescribe for you an individualized exercise plan that will reduce the likelihood of asthma symptoms during physical activity. Your chiropractor will also explain to you how this exercise plan fits in with your overall asthma treatment plan.

Conclusion

Your chiropractor can further counsel you on the possible merits of chiropractic care for chronic asthma. Some research evidence does indeed show that chiropractic spinal adjustments may be helpful for this health problem - a conclusion that many chiropractors have already drawn from their clinical experience. Ask your chiropractor about a natural, comprehensive, and individualized approach to treating your asthma.



Quote to Inspire

"There are few restrictions on your life with asthma, as long as you take care of yourself"

Jackie Joyner-Kersey

References and Sources:

1. UC Davis Health System. What is asthma? <http://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/chronicdisease/asthmaeducation/whatisasthma.html>.
2. Dynamic Chiropractic. Chiropractors Really Do Treat Asthma? <http://www.dynamicchiropractic.com/mpacms/dc/article.php?id=43343>.
3. Cuthbert SC. A multi-modal chiropractic treatment approach for asthma: a 10-patient retrospective case series. *Chiropractic Journal of Australia*. 2008. Mar; 38(1): 17-27.
4. Carina Pepino V, et. al. Manual therapy for childhood respiratory disease: a systematic review. *Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics*. 2013. Jan; 36(1): 57-65.
5. Alcantra J, et. al. The chiropractic care of patients with asthma: a systematic review of the literature to inform clinical practice. *Clinical Chiropractic*. 2012. Mar; 15(1): 23-30.
6. Hondras MA, Linde K, Jones AP. Manual therapy for asthma. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*. 2005. Issue 2
7. Balon JW. Chiropractic care in asthma and allergy. *Annals of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology*. 2004. Aug; 93(2) Supplement: S55-S60.
8. American Chiropractic Association. What is Causing the Asthma Epidemic? http://www.acatoday.org/content_css.cfm?CID=63. [accessed 2013 Oct 7].

Disclaimer: Information contained in the Wellness News Network Newsletter is for educational and general purposes only and is designed to assist you in making informed decisions about your health. Any information contained herein is not intended to substitute advice from your physician or other healthcare professional.