



WHAT IS AN ADJUSTMENT?

What is a Spinal Adjustment?

A spinal adjustment is a special procedure your chiropractor uses to reduce restrictions of your joints to allow them to move properly. Your chiropractor spends 7 years in school mastering this procedure.

Once your chiropractor has determined the location and extent of your condition, the following checklist will go through his/her mind:

- ♦ In which direction is the motion of the vertebrae restricted?
- ♦ What is the minimal amount of force necessary for correction?
- ♦ Which is the best technique to use?
- ♦ Are there any factors that would prevent the adjustment?
- ♦ Is the patient relaxed enough for the adjustment?

A Mental Checklist

An experienced chiropractor goes through this mental checklist quickly. Many chiropractors would include in the checklist a certain “feeling” when an adjustment is just right. This “feeling” can’t be put in to words, but when the chiropractor has you under his or her hands, a sort of intuition comes into play. Perhaps we can call this simply “experience”.

Physical Differences

An adjustment from on chiropractor may feel different when given by another chiropractor. One reason for this is that each chiropractor is physically different: some are tall, some are short, they have different sized hands, and they use different spinal adjusting techniques. These differences are natural when dealing with adjusting, for, as stated earlier, it is artistic as well as a scientific procedure. Keep in mind that there are typically a few paths toward the same goal, just as there are a few different chiropractic techniques; all are aimed at optimizing your health.

Putting Bone in Place

When your chiropractor introduces a force into your spine he/she is not really “putting the bone back in place”. The adjustment is unlocking the jammed or fixated vertebra from its stuck position and permitting it to move where the body wants it to go. Only the body knows exactly where the body wants it to go. The chiropractor can, however, make a reasonable determination of the general direction using analysis tools: X-ray, motion palpation, study of the electrical quality of the muscles (S-EMG), imaging tools such as MRI, and other spinal analysis procedures.

The Body is Always Trying

Your body is always trying to realign or adjust your spine. The back muscles are continuously working to pull the vertebrae back to where they belong. The chiropractor doesn't actually put the vertebrae back in place – he / she supplies just the little bit of force needed to free the vertebrae so your body will realign it with respect to proper movement.

Like a Stuck Car

It's like when your car was stuck in the mud and the wheels were spinning. Then along came a friend who pushed the car so that the wheels finally caught and pushed the car free. Now, did your friend really push your two-ton car out of the mud? Of course not! He just supplied the right amount of direction that the car needed to dislodge itself.

Do Chiropractors need to be Strong?

Do you have to be strong to give an adjustment? No, strength is not necessary-skill is. An adjustment has little to do with actual strength since the body is always trying to pull the vertebrae back into proper alignment. Most of the force is already there. Just the right push in the right direction should be all the force that is needed.

Chiropractic Adjusting Techniques

Not all chiropractors work alike. The chiropractic profession has developed nearly a hundred different methods used to analyze and treat the human body. These methods are referred to as “techniques”. Most chiropractors are familiar with at least a few of the techniques used. Each chiropractor usually has a favorite one that he/she employs for the majority of the patients. Why not ask your chiropractor what type of adjusting technique he or she uses and why?