

# **An Interview with a Chiropractor**

Doctor Scott Warner took the time out of his busy schedule to talk to us about chiropractic medicine – what it is, what it isn't, and why he chose it as a profession.

## **What made you want to become a chiropractor?**

The main reason is that when I started going to the chiropractor, it really changed my life. Not only did it help me with my pain, but it made me feel better, and it really helped me with my allergy and sinus problems. So at that point, I was like, why would I want to do anything else? Chiropractic did wonderful things for me. At that point I knew I was going to be a chiropractor.

## **Now most people don't think of allergies and sinuses as being related to the spine. Could you explain a little bit of why it is?**

Well, the brain and the nervous system runs and controls every single thing in the body. All right, so right now it's telling your heart how to work, your lungs, your kidneys, your stomach, everything, how to work. So it also controls the immune system and if your brain is functioning at 100% and there's no interference with the nervous system, which is the communication between the brain and the body, then everything should function at 100%. But when the bones go out of place they put pressure on the nerves. That's called a subluxation. Now, the brain is sending out messages at a 100% but it's not getting there at a 100%, so a lot of times symptoms can happen. And if your nervous system and immune system aren't

functioning properly, it can make you more susceptible to having allergies and sinus problems.

## **How many years of schooling does it take to become a chiropractor?**

In most states it requires eight years with four years of undergraduate mostly focusing on the sciences and four years of chiropractic school. In some states, it's a more abbreviated course where you just focus completely on science and you get it done in a little less time, six and a half to seven years total.

## **What kind of continual training do chiropractors receive?**

Every year we have to get a minimum 20 hours of continual training to keep your license active but most chiropractors get more.

## **What are the licensing requirements for chiropractors?**

There are national boards and state boards, some of which you can take while still in school. There's also a national board in physical therapy that chiropractors can take.

## **You're a physical therapist as well?**

I am nationally certified by the national board of chiropractic examiners in physical therapy.

## **What are the specializations or special certifications chiropractors might get?**

Well, there's a lot of things you can do. You can specialize and earn advanced training in x-ray, but they also have

advanced training for neurology, children, and a lot of other things, too. But you have to go get more coursework to be able to achieve chiropractic specializations.

## **How does chiropractic care work? Some of our readers are not real familiar with chiropractic care.**

Well, again, as a chiropractor, our job is to make sure your nervous system is functioning at 100%. So almost everybody could be checked for that. You don't necessarily need to be in pain or have a particular ailment.

So we check spines because most doctors don't check the spine. It's where the brain goes into the spinal cord and through those bones in the back; that's why they're very important because they go out to the entire body. So as chiropractors, we're going to be checking that your spine is in alignment and is functioning properly for the purpose of making sure there's no nerve interference.

When you go to a chiropractor, like with most doctors, you're going to be filling out a lot of paperwork. A lot of it is going to be talking about your previous history and also what you're complaining of at that particular moment. So chiropractors take a very detailed history of your concerns and your individual problems, along with your family history. At that point, we'll do very specific examinations. They might be just plain chiropractic examinations, palpations, and things like that, but we can also do orthopedic and neurological testing.

Most chiropractors utilize x-ray as well as MRIs, cat scans, surface EMGs, conduction velocity tests, so a whole lot of extensive testing can be done. At that point we'd be coming up with a proper diagnosis and treatment, specific chiropractic adjustments to realign the bones, get the joints functioning

properly and to remove the nerve interference and get your body to function at 100%. In some cases physical therapeutics can also help them with pain, and some rehabilitation can help with the process as well.

**Before chiropractic, our oldest son used to get chronic ear infections. Most people don't think of the ears and the spine as being interconnected. Can you take a moment and explain how they are?**

In regards to the ear infection, again our job is to make the body function at a higher level, by removing nerve interference. So a lot of different conditions like ear infections can be helped, because if we remove the interference, then the brain now can tell the body how to function at 100%, the way it is meant to function. So again if you look up a lot of ailments, you'll find that we don't treat any of those ailments, except by getting the pressure off the nerves, that tells the body how to work right. That's the only thing that will tell the body how to work and the only thing that will tell the body how to heal.

**How is osteopathic medicine related to chiropractic care and how is it different?**

Well in 2015, it has almost nothing to do with chiropractic care, but back in the days of 80, 100 years ago they were very similar to chiropractors in the sense that they did manipulations. They did it for a different reason. We dealt more with the nervous system, they dealt more with the arterial system. But in 2015, it has almost nothing to do with chiropractic care; it's basically very similar to medical doctors at this time. Some of them do some manipulations, but

they don't do specific chiropractic adjustments. Most are very similar to medical doctors and have very little to do with chiropractic nowadays.

**If you go to an osteopathic doctor with back pain, he's probably going to prescribe you a muscle relaxer right?**

Well, that could happen, but you could go to the osteopathic doctor for anything. They're basically licensed to do everything a medical doctor can do with very few exceptions.

**How can chiropractic care help pregnancy and labor?**

Well, again we don't help with pregnancy and labor. We help with the same thing. We're going to make sure the spine is in proper alignment. We make sure that it's functioning at 100%. So again, a chiropractor is able to help with a lot of things by getting the body to function properly, because that's the only thing that knows how to deliver the baby; the life inside the brain. So again, we're just here to make sure there's no interference with the nervous system. In the case of pregnancy, we also want to make sure the pelvis is aligned properly because the baby has to go through the pelvis.

**Dr. Marc D'Andrea mentioned online, that his patients average only four hours of labor. I know one of your other patients only labored for 15 minutes.**

Anecdotally, pregnant women come here because they do tend to have better results. Scientifically, I can't say anything about that, but anecdotally we have a lot of patients who will swear by their chiropractor during pregnancy and childbirth. So in regards to pregnancy, almost any doctor doesn't want you

to take any medication at any time. So when they're dealing with back pain, which can typically happen, patients love the chiropractor because we're very effective with back pain, and we do it without drugs. So the doctor's hands are tied in regards to treatment without medication. That's why chiropractors are a very effective tool for pregnant woman with back pain.

*Between the time of this interview and its publication, we welcomed a new baby into the family. My wife, who received regular chiropractic care from Dr. Warner throughout her pregnancy, delivered naturally after a 3½ hour labor.*

## **What are the most common reasons people have for beginning chiropractic treatment?**

Headaches are probably one of the most common reasons, back and neck pain, as well as general health issues. We talked about stomach issues, menstrual issues, sinus and allergy problems. They're finding that they're not getting completely relieved by what they were doing, taking drugs and seeing a medical doctor. You know because if they were getting 100% results, most likely, they would not try chiropractic. A lot of them go to the chiropractor because they realize they're just taking medications to deal with the symptoms which just keep coming back, again and again, and the doctors aren't doing a whole lot to correct that and they seem to be getting good results from chiropractic care.

## **What are the most common reasons people have for ending chiropractic treatment?**

Well, some people end because we put them on maintenance care. So, that's the game plan, to get their spine working, functioning at 100% and then they just need to come in for check-ups. Same reason why people would want to go to the

dentist. The goal of the dentist is not to never see a patient again, the goal of the dentist is to see you twice a year for check-ups and for two reasons. Number one is if you do have a problem, we checked you six months ago, the worse the problem is, is six months old. Also, they're going to educate you on proper techniques of brushing, flossing, and limiting sugar and all the other things that they do because that's the game plan, to keep your teeth healthy for the rest of your life, and the best way to do that they've found out, is to go every six months for check-ups and for cleanings and education. And if you go every six months, most likely you're not going to have major problems, need root canals, and so on down the road. Same thing with chiropractic care – people go on maintenance care because their problems are all fixed. At that point, we'll check them periodically to make sure they don't have any problems and also to educate them on proper stretching, strengthening, and other things like that at home.

## **Does maintenance care vary from patient to patient?**

Sure, if you start with what's called spinal hygiene very early in life, just like dental hygiene, at that point it's very easy to achieve barring any major injuries or things like that. For instance, if you wait to go to the dentist in your 40s and you go every six months, there could already be damage in there that may take years and years to fix before you can even get to get to the point where you have healthy teeth and gums and go every six months. Same thing with chiropractic care, a lot of people before they come in they've dealt with their back pain by taking over the counter medications and they help with the pain but they do nothing for the problem and now they come in here and they have arthritis and degenerative changes and it takes them a whole lot longer to get to maintenance care.

## **My wife has mild scoliosis and I have mild degenerative arthritis. Why are chiropractors better at treating these conditions than other practitioners of medicine?**

Well, in regards to mild scoliosis, doctors don't do anything to treat mild scoliosis. They would monitor to make certain it doesn't worsen to moderate or severe scoliosis; they have treatment methods for that. So for mild scoliosis, there really isn't much they can do, except maybe some home exercises. In regards to arthritis, degenerative osteoarthritis, which is what you're probably referring to as opposed to rheumatoid arthritis or sciatic arthritis. Those are diseases wherein you might need to see a medical doctor. But degenerative osteoarthritis is usually due to alignment issues and to wearing away, degeneration. As chiropractors, we realign the bones, get pressure off the nerves, and get joints functioning properly. That's the cause of degenerative arthritis. By properly aligning the spine, it doesn't continue to degenerate. That's why chiropractors are so successful with that as opposed to treating it with medication, which only treats the symptoms. One of the best treatments for degenerative arthritis in the medical community is celebrex which is a cocktail inhibitor. Even on the label, it says it treats the symptoms related to arthritis as opposed to treating the actual arthritis. The spine continues to degenerate with drug treatments; this is why chiropractic is so successful.

## **Why do chiropractors use x-ray machines?**

Well, one of the things about x-rays is that it really gives us a clear picture of the spine, that and MRIs give us all the puzzle pieces we need to see. One of the things is I don't like to guess with my patients. We can't see degenerative

arthritis. We can't see a lot of things that we could see on the x-ray. It also tells me the integrity of their spine and I can actually draw lines and angles that will actually show how to adjust as specifically as possible.

## **You mentioned MRI machines. What are some of the other tools that chiropractors use?**

Well, we have the same ability to refer out to any tests we want to, with some exceptions. So with each individual patient, if they require more specific testing, we go ahead and do that. So whatever is the best we can do, number one is for the patient's safety and to make sure they're in the appropriate medical facility, but also to make sure we give them the best possible adjustments.

## **Out of all the chiropractors I've been to over the years, your adjustments are the most gentle and effective. The only chiropractor I've met that was on your level was a chiropractor that you trained. When I told you this, you said chiropractic is an art and science. Can you explain a little more about that? Why does it feel so different getting adjusted here?**

Sure, the actual physical techniques of adjusting the spine are an art form like surgery is. Not all surgeons are as skilled as other surgeons. The skill of the surgeon is going to play a big role in how effective your surgery is going to be. Same thing with chiropractic care. People get experience, they tend to be better at the art of chiropractic later on in

their career than they are when they're in their first couple of weeks working on their first couple of patients. Experience means a whole lot, so every chiropractor needs to focus on becoming the best adjuster they can be.

## **And how long have you been a chiropractor?**

This is my 25th year.

## **Is there anything we haven't covered in this interview that you'd like to let the general public know about chiropractic.**

We're here to make sure people's bodies can be as optimal as possible. So again, I have nothing against doctors or anything with that at all. My job as a chiropractor is to get your body functioning at 100%, so well in fact that your results come out that you're feeling well. At that point, if you have no symptoms and your test results come back normal, you won't consider taking symptom-only medications for that, because you're healthy, you're feeling good, and your test results are good. So again, we're not necessarily opposed to drugs or medications or surgery; the whole point is to get you so healthy that you don't need those things. Our game plan is to get you healthy, instead of treating chronic ailments.



Check out Dr. Scott Warner at Warner Family Chiropractic.