



The 4 KEYS **to a** **HEALTHY SPINE**

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WELCOME TO HUNTER CHIROPRACTIC WELLNESS CENTRE

Thank you for choosing Hunter Chiropractic Wellness Centre for your spinal correction and health care. We understand choosing the right office is an extremely important decision and one that can improve your health and life immensely. The process of beginning to correct and maintain your spinal health, and experience the freeing benefits of better movement and function, less pain, and optimal health is very exciting.

What makes Chiropractic the most effective, safe, evidence-based, and fastest growing doctoral-level health profession in the area of spinal health and function is the years of unique training that chiropractors receive in the specific analysis and correction of spinal function and the removal of the root causes of dysfunction which is found in your movement, posture, physical fitness, nutrition, sleep, and thought patterns.

You may have questions about the care you will be receiving, so in this package, we will be answering some of the most common questions, providing an understanding on how your care works, and explaining what you can do to optimize and accelerate your results.

About Hunter Chiropractic Wellness Centre

We are a full service chiropractic wellness centre offering chiropractic care, custom foot orthotics, premium nutritional supplements, and cutting edge lifestyle coaching. Our mission is to deliver high quality care, using the most advanced technology and highest clinical and ethical standards.

About Dr. Mark Hunter B.Sc., Dip. S.I.M., D.C., C.C.W.P.



Your chiropractor, Dr. Mark Hunter, has attended nine years of post-secondary education and has obtained a Doctor of Chiropractic degree (D.C.) from Palmer College of Chiropractic. He graduated Magna Cum Laude (academic honors) and holds a post-graduate certification as a Chiropractic Wellness Practitioner (C.C.W.P.), in spinal corrective care, and extremity adjusting.

Prior to Chiropractic College, Dr. Hunter received his Bachelor of Science in Human Kinetics (B.Sc.) from the University of Guelph, and his diploma in Sports Injury Management (Dip. S.I.M.) from Sheridan College in Oakville where he worked with numerous university level sports teams. Dr. Mark is board-certified in both Canada and the United States.

Dr. Mark has performed over one hundred and fifty thousand specific chiropractic adjustments in his career, offering both relief and stabilization care as well as maintenance and wellness care. He utilizes digital x-ray analysis to ensure the most specific care possible.

His focus is to deliver safe, gentle, effective, and evidence-based chiropractic care and to provide the tools needed to empower his patients to be fully involved in their own health, healing, and wellness.

THE 4 KEYS TO GETTING THE BEST RESULTS

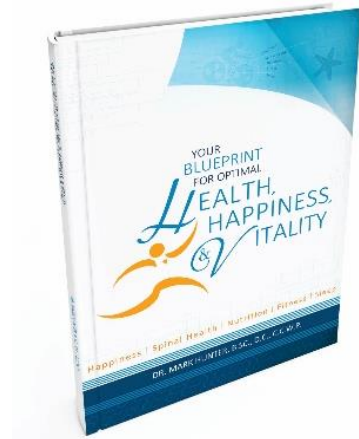
Outlined in this booklet are the guidelines for you to get the best results possible. We have a true passion and desire to help you reach your health potential and Dr. Mark has put countless hours into researching the most effective and fastest way to improve your health. These guidelines are not just a good idea; they are essential for a successful outcome. Make these simple steps a non-negotiable part of your lifestyle.

The 4 keys to fully optimizing the function and health of your spine and nervous system are:

1. Understand how your spine and nervous system work
2. Get regular and consistent chiropractic care
3. Increase the mobility & stability of your spine
4. Decrease your overall level of inflammation

In the sections to follow, you will be learning the foundations for success in each area. To further your understanding, please use these additional resources:

- ✓ Get your copy of my book "Your Blueprint for Optimal Health, Happiness, & Vitality" for detailed coaching on all aspects of health.
- ✓ "Like" our **clinic Facebook page** (Hunter Chiropractic Wellness Centre) so that we can stay connected, and you can receive Dr. Mark's health tips.
- ✓ Be sure you are receiving our **clinic e-mail series** which will provide you with videos and other necessary tools.
*** If you do not receive a confirmation e-mail for this series, please see the front desk to get set up.
- ✓ Visit our website (www.hunterchiropractic.com) to view Dr. Mark's videos and articles.



✓ **How to Sustain Healthy Lifestyle Habits Over the Long-Term**

There is a common disconnect between "knowing what to do" and actually "DOING what you know" on a consistent basis. We often blame this difficulty on a lack of time, a lack of knowledge, or a lack of money. The truth however, is that most people already KNOW of at least 2 or 3 things in their lifestyle that would make them healthier, yet they still don't do them on a regular basis. We also know that the people who live the healthiest lifestyles are not simply the people with the most extra time and money.

We all have limited time and money to varying degrees. The truth is that we all spend this limited time and money on what we are valuing most in our lives. Every dollar or minute that you spend on one thing in your life, you are making a conscious choice to not spend it on something else.

There are 2 things that most people end up realizing far too late in their lives. The first is that it is imperative that we place a strong focus in our lives on the things that we TRULY love, and that are most important and meaningful to us. The second is that if we fail to maintain good health, we will fail to sustain our ability to do these things we love.

Most people end up realizing these things too late. They realize them once they have ALREADY developed a chronic illness, and have already their ability to do what they love and value most.

Our daily lifestyle choices are the single, greatest thing in our control that determines whether we will be healthy or sick. Our genetics do play a role in our health, however it is our environment and daily choices that determine how our genetics are expressed. We are all born with a certain level of genetic susceptibility to certain chronic illnesses. However, regardless of what your risk is, you are INCREASING it with every poor lifestyle decision you regularly make.

The goal is not necessarily to be perfect. The goal is to aim at making the healthy lifestyle decisions at least 90% of the time. To do this you must begin changing your internal dialogue when making each of your daily lifestyle decisions. Delay your reflex desire for instant gratification for just a second, and ask yourself what you REALLY want in life.

Do you want the 2 minutes of pleasure that the unhealthy choice may provide? Or do you want the longer term gratification and pleasure from knowing that you are increasing your likelihood of living a long, full, vibrant life where you are able to do what you truly love?

It is this thought process that we must CHOOSE when faced with all daily decisions with regards to what to eat, what to drink, when to go to bed, how to think and react to the situations in your life, whether or not to keep well-adjusted and healthy, and whether or not to move sufficiently and exercise.

Repeatedly practicing this thought process at every decision will eventually re-wire your brain, making this line of thinking more automatic. This is where a healthy lifestyle becomes easier.

The main thing you must realize is that a healthy lifestyle does NOT mean depriving yourself or forcing your self do things you dislike. You are just DELAYING instant gratification and SUPPORTING what you actually want most in life.

At the end of the day, we must all realize that we are already DOING the things in our life that we really want. Many people say that they want better health, but the truth is that if they REALLY wanted to live a better lifestyle, they would probably be doing so already. It is ONLY once being healthy becomes something that you absolutely HAVE TO do, more than anything else in your life, that better health will become easy. You just need to DECIDE what you really want.

Get started right away with the implementations described in this booklet. And be sure to pick up a copy of my book. Choose to make slow changes, one at a time of you need, or ideally just dive straight in the deep end and dedicate a 30-60 day period to just putting all the pieces in at once. This will let you see and feel first-hand the difference that an optimally healthy lifestyle will make.

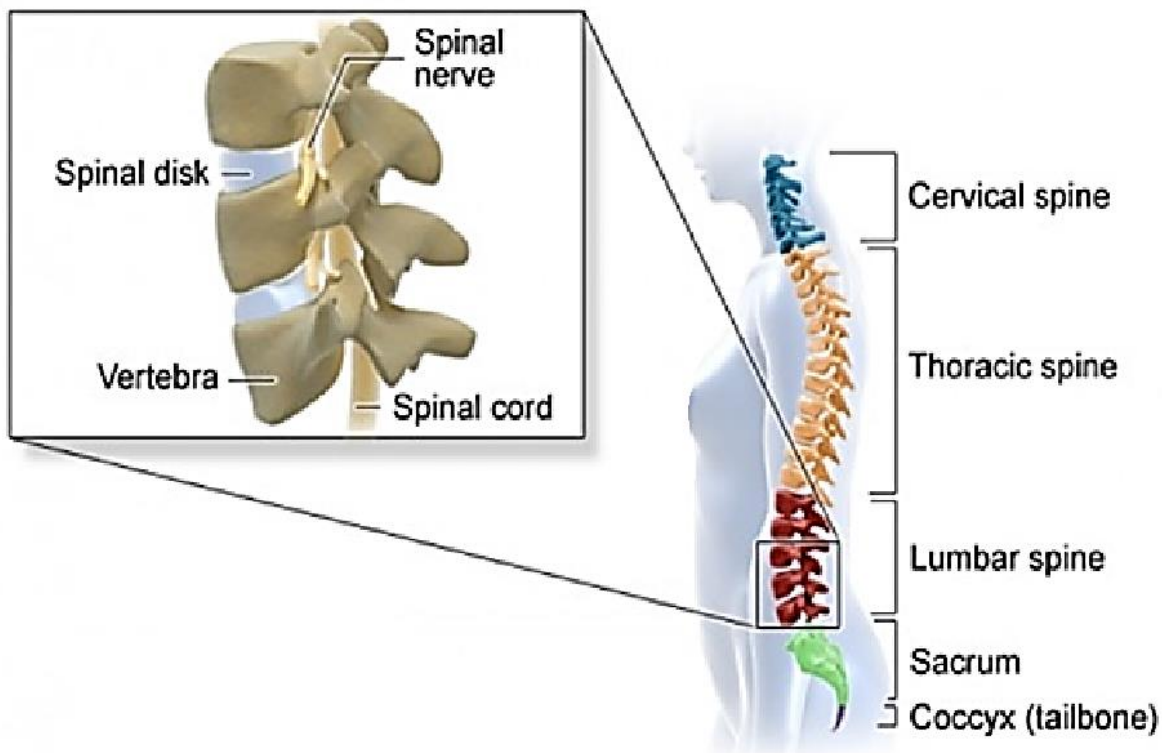
Now let's get started.

#1: UNDERSTAND HOW YOUR SPINE & NERVOUS SYSTEM WORK

The spine is our body's central support structure and houses and protects our nervous system. It is made up of a chain of 24 bones called vertebrae and is flexible due to elastic ligaments and spinal disks. The disks keep the spine flexible so that it can bend and move, they provide a space for spinal nerves to exit, and they also absorb shocks that are transferred into the spine as we move our body.

The nervous system consists of your brain, spinal cord, and all the nerves of your body and **it controls the function of virtually every cell, muscle, and organ in your body.** The nervous system coordinates when your heart beats, when your lungs fill with air, when your food is digested, how you grow and develop, how your immune system fights an infection, how you feel, etc. Your nervous system adapts your body to your environment, and it coordinates the release of hormones, neuropeptides, digestive enzymes, stomach acid, and much more.

Needless to say, it is essential that your spine and nervous system stay healthy so that your body can function properly.



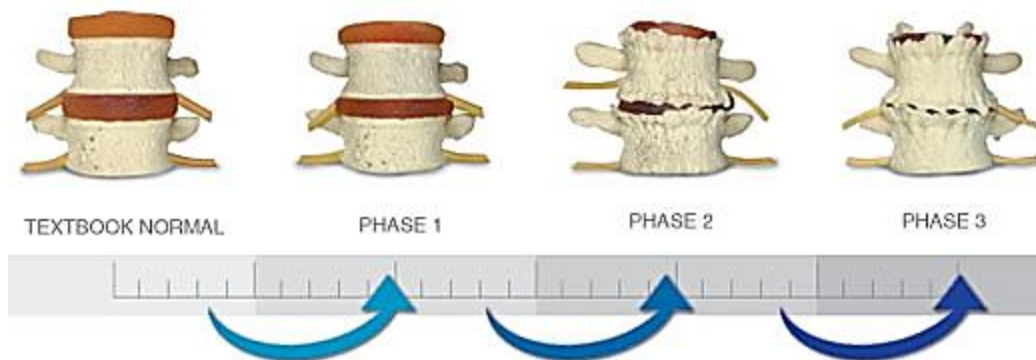
Areas and curvature of the spine

What Is a Spinal Subluxation and How Does It Affect Your Health?

Normal function of our nervous system requires proper movement and alignment of our spinal vertebrae. The condition of your spine where a vertebral segment has become out of alignment, fixated, and is interfering with the normal function of our nerve system is called a **subluxation**.

Subluxations have three negative effects on our body. First, research has clearly shown that subluxations cause nerve irritation that chronically elevate our stress hormones. This will affect our body's ability to adapt to our environment, causing fatigue, breakdown, and eventually chronic illness. Symptoms can include increased pain, poor concentration, memory loss, anxiety, depression, low energy, poor sleep, insulin resistance, weight gain, poor immune function, poor digestion, low fertility, trouble sleeping, bone loss, menstrual cycle issues, and more.

Secondly, subluxations cause accelerated spinal arthritis and disc degeneration. This is a permanent and progressive process that can only be reduced when normal spinal motion and alignment is restored. Most spinal arthritis is NOT simply the result of aging, but of poor function in the spine over too long of a time period. Although you cannot reverse spinal degeneration, you can prevent more damage from progressing by getting regular and consistent chiropractic care.



Stages of Spinal Degeneration and Disc Disease. The Progressive Destruction Due to Subluxation.

Thirdly, subluxations pre-dispose us to pain and injury by weakening the structure of the spine. Common symptoms include headaches, migraines, neck and back pain, muscle tension, nerve irritation, shoulder pain, sciatica, hip pain, numbness/tingling, and many other issues.

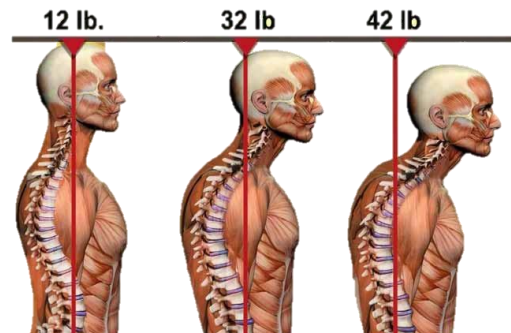
The bottom line is that subluxations are a significant stressor to your body. However, people often fail at maintaining good spinal health because they do not understand that subluxations can be present in their spine for years or even decades before a symptom first appears.

Most doctors will not properly check your spine or refer you to someone who will. And if you do have a symptom, you will likely be recommended medication, therapy, or surgery to relieve the symptom. However, health is not about the absence of symptoms, it's about optimal function. Masking symptoms with drugs, therapy, or surgery while leaving subluxations unaddressed will only make sick people feel better as they get sicker and sicker. There is a better way!

What Causes Spinal Subluxations?

Subluxations are primarily caused by the cumulative effects of too much sitting, poor posture, and repetitive motions, which have become commonplace in our modern and sedentary lifestyle.

Other causes of subluxations include the accumulation of the silent effects of a stressful birth process, childhood falls, traumas, car accidents, sports injuries, poor nutrition, poor sleep patterns, lack of fitness, and emotional stress.

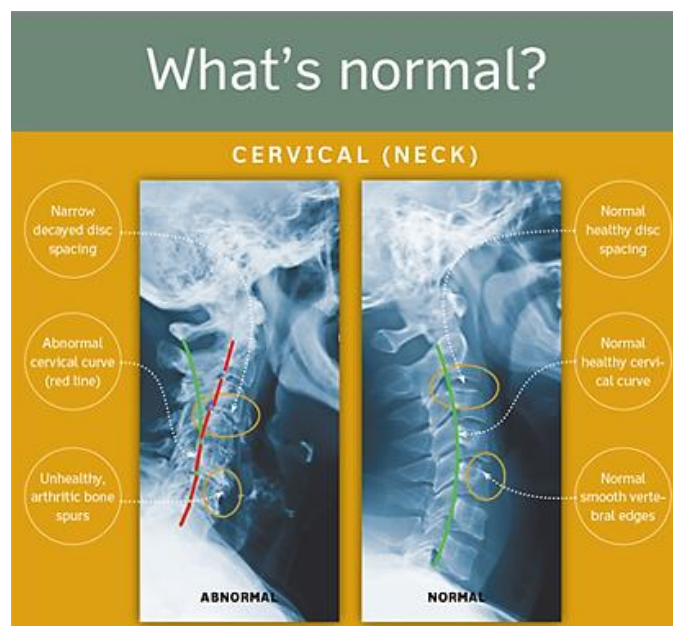
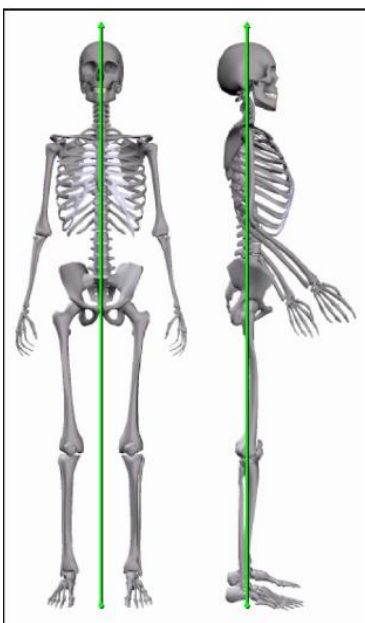


As our head loses normal posture, it places increasingly heavy loads on the rest of our spine. For every inch it goes forward, the weight of your head doubles.

How Do You Know If Your Spine Is Healthy?

In order for your spine to be healthy, it must move properly at every individual segment as well as having healthy alignment and posture from the front and side. From the front, the spine should be straight and from the side, the spine requires 3 healthy curvatures (one in the neck, one in the mid-back, and one in the lower back). The discs need to be equal and full height and vertebrae should have smooth edges. **This is ALL required for you to have proper healthy nerve function and health.** Many people will go most of their lives without ever having this properly assessed.

But since you cannot feel subluxations, then how do you know if your spine is healthy or not? The only way to know for sure is to be checked by a qualified doctor of chiropractic. Chiropractors are the only doctors that specialize in the detection and correction of subluxation.



#2: GET REGULAR AND CONSISTENT CHIROPRACTIC CARE

Our current industrial culture is as hard on our spines as it is on our teeth. We now sit for an average of 32 years of our lives. Contrastingly, our ancestors were moving every day and NEVER sat at a desk or in front of a screen. This is something that is no longer possible in today's society. As a result, and just as regular dental care has become essential to maintain healthy teeth, regular chiropractic care and spinal exercise has now become required to maintain a healthy spine.

Healing takes time and repetition. Your spine will heal and maintain best when your adjustments are done in a regular pattern. The largest interference to optimal results is missing your originally scheduled appointments. If you want the best results, we highly recommend you follow the adjustment schedule that Dr. Mark has set out for your care.



A regular and consistent adjustment schedule is the key to successful spinal care.

Initially, the goal is to use REPETITION with your adjustments to break up scar tissue adhesions that have accumulated over the past years of your life. This restores healthy neurology, alignment, stabilization, and the ability for your body to move freely and comfortably without pain.

And it is also crucial to give this process sufficient TIME, as most spinal problems have been present for many years before a person first seeks chiropractic care. Initial relief often comes quite quickly, however it can often take in the range of 6-24 months to see optimal improvement in actual spinal health and function.

Once your spinal health has been restored to an optimal level, you can then begin the most important part of your care – maintenance and prevention. This is the easier part. The goal is to counteract the effects of stress from your daily lifestyle, to prevent spinal health degeneration, and to maintain healthy spinal motion, posture, neurology, functional ability, performance, and quality of life.

Some people only use chiropractic care like an Advil for pain relief. Yes, chiropractic care is a wonderful and healthy method of pain relief, however the real health benefits from chiropractic comes from getting regular and consistent spinal maintenance care. Feeling better from your chiropractic care is fantastic, however it does not mean that your spine has healed or corrected, or that the stresses that cause your problems in the first place have been eliminated.

The most important point is this, regardless of whether you feel pain or not, regular chiropractic care and spinal hygiene is necessary for optimal health and function in today's sedentary, stressful culture.

How Will Chiropractic Care Improve Your Life?

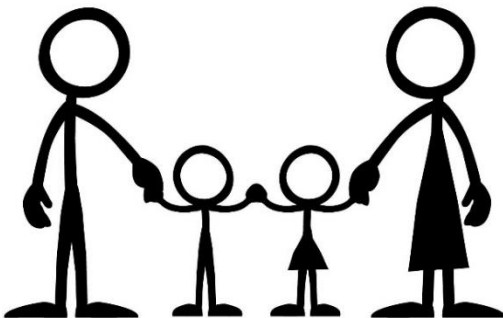
There are numerous benefits for families who utilize chiropractic care. These advantages are associated with reduced nerve interference from subluxations. Many people report:

- feeling much better – less pain
- moving better
- better posture
- being more agile and flexible
- sleeping better
- getting sick less often
- feeling less anxious and depressed
- better digestion and elimination
- happier
- healthier
- less stress
- more energy

... and much more!

Who Is Eligible for Chiropractic Care?

Due to the stressful, sedentary nature of today's culture, Chiropractic care benefits everyone, regardless of whether they feel symptoms or not.



Regular maintenance care helps prevent subluxations from accumulating due to daily lifestyle stress.

Getting children checked for subluxation as early in life as possible allows the best chance for a healthy spine and nervous system for their future. Many adult problems begin as childhood problems that were never addressed.

Chiropractic care for children is extremely precise and gentle, and is best begun shortly after birth if possible.

#3: INCREASE THE MOBILITY AND STABILITY OF YOUR SPINE

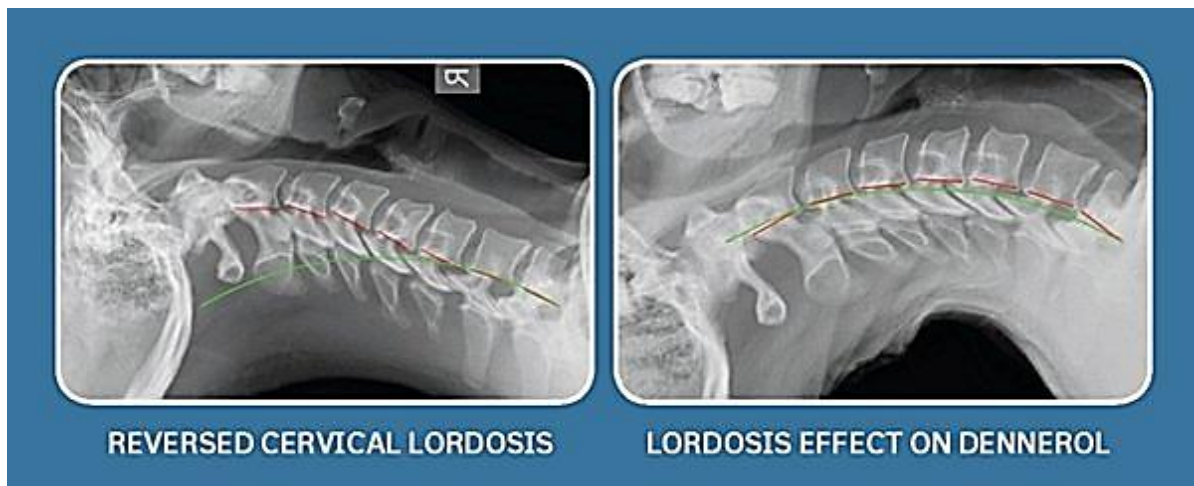
✓ Do Spinal Traction

Your neck from the side should have a natural semi-circular curve called a cervical lordosis. Subluxations, accidents and poor posture all contribute to a loss of this natural neck curve, putting increased tension on your spine and placing you at greater risk of nerve irritation, ligament damage, muscle tension, and spinal degeneration. Ultimately, an abnormal neck curve may lead to a number of health-related disorders.



The cervical traction orthotic helps you to get better and faster results.

Our traction orthotic offer a simple solution to more effective chiropractic care by allowing patients to continue care at home. Correction of improper spinal curvature can be accomplished anywhere, anytime. And that means faster, better results, which translates to less pain, more flexibility, and improved function. **Ask us about getting started on home traction.**



✓ Be Mindful of Your Posture

When standing, be sure to keep your head and chest up and shoulders slightly back. When sitting, sit to the back of your chair, maintain a curve in your lower back, keep your head and chest up, and bring your shoulders to the back of the chair. Use a lumbar support to help maintain this proper position. Ensure your computer screen is high enough so that you are looking straight ahead (not down).

When sleeping, look for a bed that has good support and firmness but with a layer of memory foam or cushion to reduce any tender spots on your spine. If sleeping on your back, use as thin of a pillow as possible so that your head is not pushed forward. If sleeping on your side, use a pillow which is thick enough to keep your head supported in a neutral (centered) position.

✓ Do Daily Spinal Hygiene Exercises

These exercises are the core mobility and postural stability exercises that will help get and keep your spine healthy. Also see the demonstrations included on the next page. They only take a few minutes, so the key is to incorporate them into your daily routine (e.g. during work breaks, whenever you get up to go to the washroom, when you wake up in the morning, or before bed).

The exercises are aimed at countering the effects of too much sitting, poor posture, and not enough movement. They assist in healing, restoring motion and preventing spinal degeneration.

➤ **Y, W, T, L Postural Exercise:** see pictures on the following page.

Stand in good posture, keeping your stomach tucked and ab muscles engaged. Begin with the first position ("Y"), squeeze your shoulder blades together as much as possible, and keep your thumbs pointed behind you. Hold for 15 seconds, and then repeat with W, T, and L.

- Y: Arms up straight beside your ears, and your thumbs pointed behind you.
- W: Arms out and parallel with your shoulders, making a 90° angle at your elbows, hands pointed up and thumbs behind you.
- T: Arms straight out at each side, your palms facing up and thumbs pointed behind you.
- L: With your arms down at your sides, make a 90° angle at your elbows with your arms pointed outward at each side, your palms up and thumbs pointed behind you.

➤ **Spinal Range of Motion Exercises:** see pictures on the following page.

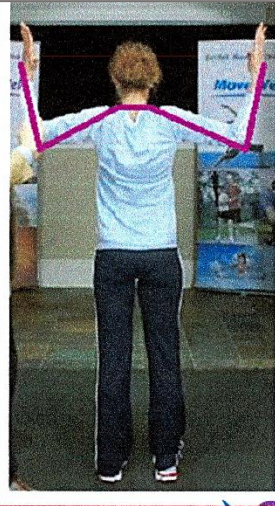
Perform each of these exercises for both sides of your body. For each exercise, move gently to your maximum range of motion and hold for a minimum of 15 seconds. Visualize moving each spinal joint from the top of your neck down to the bottom of your spine. Move your spine as far as you comfortably can. Be sure to breathe normally.

- Neck rotation: Rotate your head to one side as far as possible and hold. Repeat to the other side.
- Neck lateral Flexion: Flex your head to one side as far as possible and hold. Repeat to the other side.
- Neck extension: Extend head back as far as possible and hold. Discontinue and consult doctor if dizziness occurs.
- Neck flexion: Flex head forward as far as possible and hold.
- Spinal rotation: Place your feet shoulder width apart. Hold your hands together with your arms extended in front of you. Rotate your head, shoulders, and hips as far as possible and hold. Repeat to the other side.
- Spinal forward flexion: Bend forward at your hip with your knees straight as far as possible and hold.
- Spinal lateral flexion: Bend to the side at your head, mid-back, and then lower back as far as possible and hold. Repeat to the other side.
- Spinal backward extension: Extend backward as far as possible and hold.

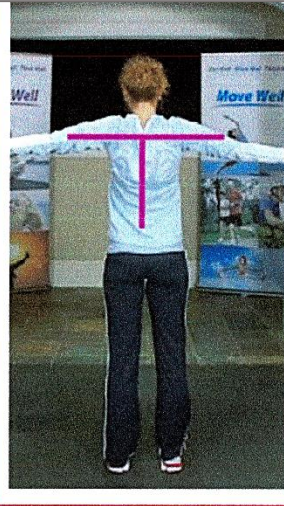
Spinal Hygiene and Range of Motion Demonstrations.



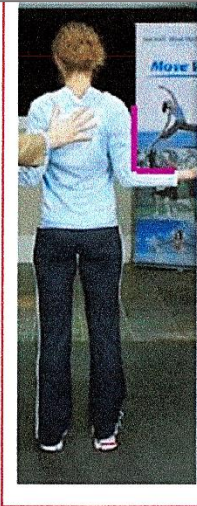
Y



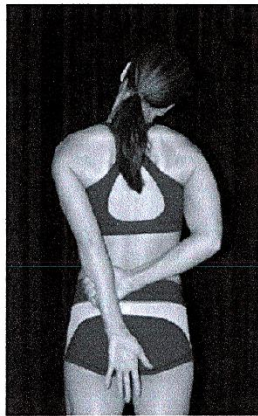
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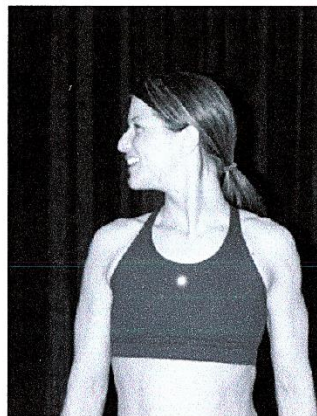
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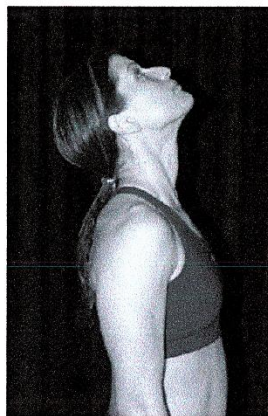
L



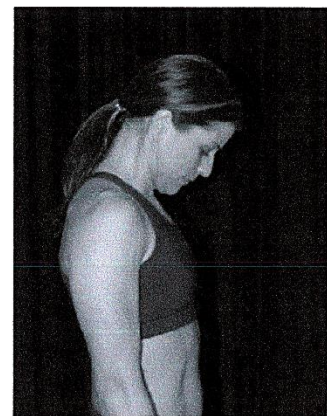
Neck Lateral Flexion



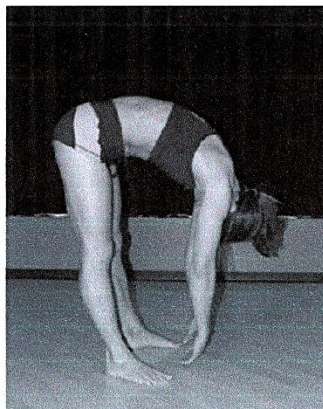
Neck Rotation



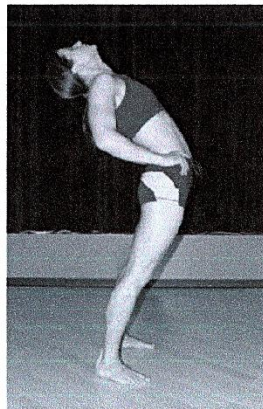
Neck Extension



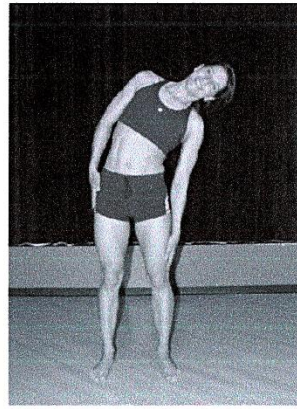
Neck Flexion



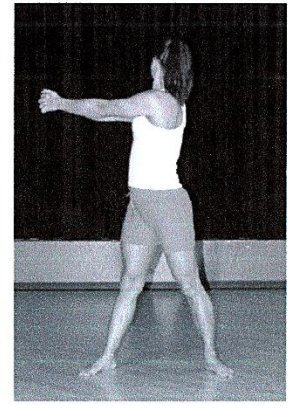
Spinal Forward Flexion



Spinal Backward Extension



Spinal Lateral Flexion



Spinal Rotation

✓ Sit Less and Move More Every Day

Our body requires regular movement and aerobic activity to be healthy. Lack of movement affects our heart, nervous system, spinal health, bone density, and virtually all other body functions. Even going to the gym for an hour each day is NOT enough to compensate for spending the rest of your day sitting.



Our industrialized culture has engineered movement out of our lives. We spend a majority of our days working at computers, watching TV, using smart phones, driving, etc. Humans have become sedentary and de-conditioned, and are equivalent to wild animals in captivity. When any animal is deprived of movement, it will get sick. Humans are no different.

- **Minimize sitting as much as possible during your day.** Aim towards the ideal goal of sitting no more than 3 hours per day. Just limit as much sitting as you can! If you sit at work, get up as often as possible to move around, and make sure to minimize sitting during your breaks and while at home. Consider investing in a standing/sitting (or treadmill) workstation.
- **Get 30-60 minutes of aerobic activity every day.** Getting sufficient aerobic activity means moving your body for at least 30-60 minutes per day at an intensity where you could just barely carry on a conversation. This 30-60 minutes can be done all at once or broken into a few sessions. Just simply MOVE your body! Park your car further away, take the stairs, go for a brisk walk/jog/run/bike/row/swim, play with your kids/pets, or do an activity you love.

✓ Exercise For At Least 30 minutes, 3-5 Days Per Week

To be healthy, your body requires you to move regularly (3-5 days per week) at a higher intensity AND against resistance (weight). This is required for normal heart function, spinal health, body weight, brain function, bone density, hormonal balance, fat burning, lean muscle, and more.

- **Include Maximal Effort Exercise.** Get your body moving for brief periods at an intensity where you would not be able to carry on a conversation while doing it. Work as hard as you safely can. You should be exhausted afterwards, but NOT in pain. Aim to do 7-8 intervals where you alternate between “working” for 5-30 seconds, and then “resting” for 30-90 seconds. You can do this while running, biking, walking, weight training, doing push-ups, etc.
- **Include Resistance Training:** Make sure to incorporate weights, resistance bands, or bodyweight exercises into your exercise program.

Keys: 1) Ensure the movements are constantly changing, don't simply stick to one activity or movement pattern; 2) Rest at least 2 days per week so that your body can recover; 3) Warm up, cool down, mobilize, and stretch. Be safe. Seek the assistance of a great trainer or therapist.



#4: REDUCE YOUR OVERALL LEVEL OF INFLAMMATION

✓ Take These 2 Essential Supplements Daily

I recommend 2 primary supplements for all patients and their families. We carry both in the clinic.

EPA & DHA (omega-3 fatty acids), vitamin D3, vitamin A, and probiotics are very important nutrients to supplement with for 2 primary reasons. 1) These nutrients are “essential”, which means that your body REQUIRES them for health, but your body cannot produce them on its own. They must come from your diet or environment. 2) These nutrients are now difficult to get sufficiently in our diet due to changes in our environment. Supplementation is necessary.

It is important to use a high quality brand such as Innate Choice where the nutrients are as close to their natural (non-synthetic) form as possible and are 3rd party tested for purity and potency.

1) OmegaA+ D Sufficiency (Innate Choice brand)



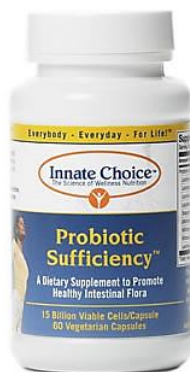
This supplement contains a natural source and ideal combination of EPA and DHA (omega 3 fatty acids) from pure fish oil, vitamin D3 (naturally occurring) from lanolin, and vitamin A (retinol) from pure cod liver oil.

1 serving (1 teaspoon or 4 capsules) contains: 1 g of EPA+DHA (omega 3 fatty acids), 2000 IU of vitamin D3, and 1000 IU of vitamin A.

Recommendation: Adults take 2 servings (2 teaspoons or 8 capsules) per day. Kids take ½ teaspoon (or 2 capsules) per 40 pounds of body weight.

2) Probiotic bacteria (Innate Choice brand)

This supplement contains a 15 billion count of the normal, healthy bacteria we are designed to ingest. The bacteria is derived from soil, fruits and vegetables (not dairy, soy, wheat, or grains).



Recommendation: Adults take 2 capsules per day. If you have never taken a probiotic supplement before, begin with 1 capsule per day for the first week. Children take ½ capsule per day for every 40 pounds of body weight. For children you can open the capsule and place the powder on a spoon of food or in a beverage, and then re-close the capsule and return to the fridge.

Supplementation with these nutrients is not optional; it is essential for health, performance, and prevention.

1) Omega + D sufficiency contains:

- ✓ **Omega-3 fatty acids (EPA, DHA, DPA) - from pure fish oil.**
 - Plays a vital role in reducing systemic inflammation in the body.
 - EPA and DHA are essential for the proper function of every cell, tissue and organ in our body, especially our heart and brain.
 - Deficient omega 3 fatty acid (and excessive omega 6) creates a pro-inflammatory state in our body, and this sets the stage for virtually every chronic illness. This unhealthy imbalance is largely caused by our modern diet of refined grain, vegetable/seed oils, grain-fed meat, farmed fish, and processed food.
- ✓ **Vitamin D3 (naturally occurring) - from lanolin**
 - Sufficient levels of vitamin D are necessary for the proper function of every system in our body, especially our immune system, bone density, and inflammation levels.
 - Deficiency in vitamin D is a major risk factor chronic illness. We are designed to get vitamin D from sufficient sun exposure (without sunscreen). Most Canadians are deficient due to excessive time spent indoors and sunscreen use (which blocks vitamin D production). Dietary sources of vitamin D are simply not sufficient.
- ✓ **Vitamin A (Retinol) – from pure, Norwegian cod liver oil.**
 - Vitamin A is a very important catalyst in the body, and is required by everyone for optimal health. It plays an especially important role in our immune function, and it enhances the function of Vitamin D3.
 - As active vitamin A (retinol) is only found in significant amounts in organ meats, most North Americans don't get enough. The beta-carotene found in fruits and vegetables is not sufficient, as only 3% gets converted into active vitamin A. Additionally, 45% of adults lack the ability to convert ANY beta-carotene to retinol.

2) Probiotic Sufficiency contains:

- ✓ **Probiotic bacteria – derived from soil, fruits, and vegetables (non-dairy)**
 - Dietary sufficiency of healthy microorganisms (probiotics) is necessary for the proper function of our digestive and immune systems and for our overall level of wellness and chronic illness prevention.
 - We now consume one millionth of the healthy probiotic that our ancestors did before the introduction of pesticides, herbicides, and industrial farming. And, we currently kill many of the probiotic bacteria we do ingest with poor nutrition, prescription drugs, and stress. Dietary deficiency of healthy probiotic bacteria is implicated as a causal factor in the lack of health and vitality of adults and children. It is very difficult now to be sufficient in dietary probiotic without supplementation.

✓ **Eat The Most Nutrient-Dense, Whole Foods**

My Optimal Nutrition Plan is designed to optimize your body fat levels, decrease inflammation, increase energy, optimize performance, and increase health.

1. For every meal:
 - ✓ Fill 1/3 of your plate with LEAN, HEALTHY PROTEIN
 - ✓ Fill 2/3 of your plate with VEGETABLES AND FRUITS (mostly vegetables)
 - ✓ Add a small amount of HEALTHY FAT.
 - ✓ Experiment with different herbs & spices (delicious, nutritious, and anti-inflammatory)
2. Eat 3 meals per day (and minimize snacking).
 - ✓ Keep snacking to a minimum as this is often where people fall off track with their diet.
 - ✓ The key is to eat enough food at each meal (in the proportions described) so that you are not hungry for the next 5 hours. Adjust your food volume accordingly as you go.
 - ✓ If needed, ideal snacks include: small handful of nuts/seeds; piece of fruit; cut veggies; guacamole; grass-fed jerky; hardboiled egg; few squares of dark chocolate.
 - ✓ If needed, you can indulge 2-3 times per week in a small portion of something you are really craving. Stick to the optimal plan however, at least 80-90% of the time.
3. Drink lots of pure water. Aim for 8 cups of per day. You can also include limited herbal tea, tea, kombucha, and coffee (limit/eliminate dairy and sweeteners).
4. Athletes: Add an extra “post-workout meal” of healthy whey protein with healthy carbohydrate (e.g. a piece of fruit). In the next meal following your workout, include some starchy vegetables (i.e. sweet potato, potato, yam, squash). Extra meals (i.e. extra protein, carbohydrate, and fat) may also be needed to support very high activity levels.
5. Supplement daily with Omega+D sufficiency (omega-3, vitamin D3, and cod liver oil), and plant-based probiotics. Also include a healthy veggie greens powder (e.g. Greens First).

Lean, Healthy Protein:	Vegetables & Fruits	Healthy Fat
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideal choices: fish (ideally wild), chicken and eggs (ideally naturally-raised), grass-fed beef, and clean whey protein. • If organic, naturally-raised options are not possible, eat smaller portions, buy the leanest cuts, and remove visible fat and skin. • Aim for 3-5 servings per day. 1 serving = size of your palm. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good variety of leafy vegetables, roots, tubers, bulbs, etc. Large variety of colours. Lots of leafy greens. Buy local and organic when possible. • Aim for 8-10 servings (the size of your fist) per day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideal choices: coconut oil, avocado oil, macadamia oil, grass-fed ghee/butter, and extra-virgin olive oil. Also avocado, seeds, nuts (almond, walnut, pecan, macadamia, hazelnut, pecan, pistachio), nut butters, and coconut milk. • Aim for 5 small servings of healthy fat per day.

What to Avoid (or eliminate completely):

*** Remember you CAN indulge occasionally (2-3 times per week) in a small portion of one of these things if needed (unless you are intolerant). But, save your indulgences for something you are REALLY craving!

- Refined Sugar and artificial sweetener – Includes raw or refined sugar, high fructose corn syrup, dextrose, glucose, fructose, fruit juice, dried fruit, agave, honey, maple syrup, molasses, etc. These are found in most desserts and many processed foods. Artificial sweeteners include aspartame, acesulfame k, sucralose, saccharin, stevia, etc.
- Refined Grains – Includes products made from most flours (wheat, sorghum, millet, spelt, buckwheat, barley, oat, rice, and corn). This includes breads, cereals, crackers, pasta, and most processed foods.
- Refined seed/vegetable oils – Includes high omega-6 oils such as peanut, soybean, sunflower, safflower, canola, corn, cottonseed, palm kernel, sesame, and grapeseed. Also includes trans fats, margarines, and all hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils. This includes many cooking oils, as well as most packaged, processed and fast foods.
- Refined Dairy products – Many people are intolerant to dairy, and this results in many different negative health effects as a result of inflammation. This includes cow's milk, cream, yogurt, cheese, cottage cheese, ice cream, etc. As most refined dairy products are nutritionally inferior and non-essential for optimal health, I would limit/eliminate them.
- Non-Fermented Soy. Soy milk, soy protein, and other soy based products or ingredients.
- Most processed, packaged, and fast food. – Includes most processed, packaged, and fast food due to their generally high content of refined sugar, artificial sweetener, refined grain, refined seed/vegetable oil, dairy, soy, sodium, chemical additives, MSG, and genetically modified (GMO) ingredients. Also avoid drugs, alcohol, tobacco products, and most commercial personal hygiene and household cleaning products.

*** The rationale for avoiding the foods listed above is they are all nutrient poor and non-essential when compared to eating vegetables, fruit, naturally-raised meat/seafood/eggs, and healthy fats.

The Optimal Nutrition Plan I have provided consists of the whole, natural foods which are highest in nutrient density (vitamins, minerals, essential fats, amino acids, etc.) per calorie, the lowest in toxins, and that combine together to optimally fulfill your daily nutritional requirements.

“Gray-area” foods that you CAN eat, but are not optimally recommended include full-fat dairy products, whole grains (e.g. rice, quinoa, oats), legumes (beans, peas, chickpeas, lentils), and non-fermented soy (e.g. tofu, tempeh, edamame). Organic/non-GMO is best. These foods are okay to eat, but are simply less nutrient dense per calorie and don't have anything in them that you cannot get sufficiently by eating the foods described in the Optimal Nutrition Plan.

✓ Get Sufficient Sleep

It is impossible to achieve optimal results without adequate sleep. Many people do not realize how important getting restful sleep is to our health and function. Evidence suggests that most people need 7-9 hours of sleep to function properly, and this is required by your body for proper maintenance and repair of our neurological, endocrine, immune, musculoskeletal, and digestive systems.



Lack of sleep is a major stressor to our body. It fundamentally alters a balance of nature that has been programmed into our biology since the origin of our species. Lack of sufficient sleep cause impaired immune function, mood disorders, insulin resistance and obesity, systemic inflammation, cognitive decline, increased risk of virtually all chronic illness, and a shortened lifespan.

To get better sleep:

- Make your room cool and completely dark. Use black out curtains and cover all LED lights.
- Dim the house lights after sun-down.
- Stop all computer, cell phone, and TV use at least 1 hour before bed.
- Be in bed ready to sleep at least 7 to 9 hours prior to your planned wake-up time.
- When lying in bed, focus your attention on what you are grateful for and what was positive in your day and week. Keep a notebook next to your bed, and if you find yourself thinking about something for the next day, simply write it down and let it go until tomorrow.

✓ Practice a Healthy Mindset



- Accept, and let go of, the things in your life that you cannot control.
 - You can't control the past, what other people think/say/do, or something happening in the future that you have no influence on.
- Take responsibility for your present and future. Focus on what you CAN control (i.e. what YOU do). Focus on potential solutions, and on developing yourself and your own personal resources.
- Put your problems in perspective. Imagine explaining them to someone in a 3rd world country or to someone with a critical illness.
- Be present. We spend far too much mental energy regretting the past and worrying about the future. Focus more on your surroundings, on nature, what you are grateful for, and what is positive in your day. The more you look for the positives in your life, the more your brain will be trained to see them.
- Identify what you love most in your life, and what things are truly most important, meaningful and valuable to you. Make these a priority in your regular schedule. Learn about them, develop your skill with them. There is nothing more important for you to do!
- Remember that the daily lifestyle choices in this book are the key to you being ABLE to fulfill what is most important to you. Choose the healthy choices. Take some control.

F.A.Q.

Q - What Exactly Does My Adjustment Do?

A - There are two parts to your adjustment. The first is a "manual" adjustment to release any spinal fixations and restore mobility to your spine. This is done with a small, gentle thrust into a subluxated (improperly moving) vertebrae. With this adjustment you may hear a small "cracking" or "popping" sound which is simply a release of gas from the fixated joint. Your adjustment may alternatively be done with an "impulse" instrument or a gentle "drop" piece on the chiropractic table. It is important to note that this sound is not the goal of the adjustment, and is not necessary for the adjustment to be successful.

The second part of your adjustment is what sets Hunter Chiropractic apart from traditional chiropractic care and that is to correct posture abnormalities. Dr. Mark uses a specialized adjustment called a Mirror Image Postural Adjustment. This is a gentle "drop" table adjustment made to your spine while you are positioned in the opposite (mirror-image) of your abnormal posture. These adjustments reset your nervous system's regulation of postural muscle balance by triggering improved muscle and nerve reflexes. This adjustment will be the same every time you are adjusted unless your posture changes. The goal with Mirror Image adjusting is to make a permanent correction to your spine and nervous system.

By restoring normal alignment and reducing nerve interference, your body is able heal itself. This is why adjustments have such profound success in relieving so many different conditions that people experience, as well as improving overall health, function, and performance.

Q - Is Every Adjustment the Same Each Time and Are They the Same for All Patients?

A - No. Your chiropractic adjustments are specific to the unique needs of your spine on each adjustment. Each visit, Dr. Mark will palpate and assess your spine for restricted motion (subluxation) and will only adjust the subluxated areas of your spine. Some areas of your spine may be chronically subluxated due to previous injury or repetitive stress from your daily lifestyle. Those areas may need to be adjusted on most visits.

The Mirror Image Postural part of your adjustment will look and feel the same as this adjustment is continuously focusing on correcting your abnormal postural pattern. And because many people have similar postural issues, this adjustment may look similar from one patient to the next.

Q - How Long Should an Adjustment Take?

A - Once Dr. Mark is familiar with your spine after the initial examination and first few adjustments, it will only take a few moments for him to palpate and adjust your subluxations on each visit. The truly amazing thing about chiropractic adjustments is that they only take a moment to perform, but they produce extremely profound results. The important factor is not how long each of your adjustments take, but how each of your adjustments adds and builds on the one before. This is how your spine and nervous system heal with chiropractic care. If you have any concerns or new issues, be sure to communicate this with Dr. Mark and he will take the appropriate time to assess your concern.

Q - How Long Will I Need to Be Adjusted and Stay Under Care?

A - There is a myth that once you start getting adjusted you have to keep getting adjusted. Chiropractic wellness care however, is like brushing your teeth, eating healthy, or exercising. You do it initially to GET healthy, but you continue doing it regularly because you want to STAY healthy. The fact is, our current modern lifestyles are stressful and they cause subluxations to accumulate if we are not keeping our spine maintained.

Chiropractic care has one purpose and that is to remove subluxations. So when a patient first starts chiropractic care, subluxations have most often been building up in the spine for many years. Therefore, in the initial phase of care, the objective will be to restore as much normal function to the spine as possible. This phase of care is called intensive care and typically works best with an adjustment frequency of 2-3 adjustments per week for 1-3 months. This allows sufficient time and repetition for the soft tissues to correct and heal.

Once relief and stabilization is achieved, chiropractic care is best used as a preventative strategy. For wellness care, Dr. Mark generally recommends 2-4 chiropractic maintenance check-ups/adjustments per month along with daily "spinal hygiene" exercises. How often you need to be adjusted to stay healthy depends on your current level of spinal health, the amount of sitting you do, your stress level, how fit you are, and the overall quality of your lifestyle. Most people function best with weekly adjustments – including Dr. Mark!

Q - What If I Do Not Have the Time in My Schedule or I Cannot Afford Dr. Mark's Best Recommendation?

A - Dr. Mark will always give you his best recommendation for the fastest and most efficient way to correct, stabilize, and maintain your spine. However, if your finances or schedule is a limiting factor, it's always okay to get adjusted at a slower frequency. The results may just take a little longer to achieve. The most important thing is to find a frequency of adjustments that will allow you to get started with chiropractic care and to sustain it over the long-term.

Q - Should I Still Continue My Care If My Pain or Symptoms Are Gone?

A - Maintenance check-ups are just as important when you do not have pain or symptoms. As you cannot actually feel most subluxations as they accumulate in your spine from daily lifestyle stresses, the best time to be adjusted is BEFORE symptoms arise.

Q - Should Kids Be Adjusted?

A - Children should be checked and adjusted from birth. This allows the best opportunity for a healthy spine and nervous system for their future.

The birth process can be stressful for the baby, and children today are exposed to many unnatural stressors in their lifestyles (just like their parents are). Most pressures accumulate silently in their spines and often do not show up until many years later. In fact, many adult problems are actually the result of childhood issues that were never properly detected.

Pressure in a child's spine can be associated with different symptoms such as colic, torticollis, ear infections, frequent colds, sleeping problems, learning & concentration issues, and more.

Q - What If My Medical Doctor Recommends That I Do Not See a Chiropractor?

A - Understand that the healthcare professional with the most expertise in the inter-segmental motion and function of the spine is a Doctor of Chiropractic. No other professional has more training or is more qualified to advise you on this aspect of your health than a chiropractor. **The undisputable fact in the scientific research** is that, *regardless of whether or not a patient experiences symptoms*, they will benefit from having the function of their spine restored and maintained with chiropractic care.

The fact that chiropractic care is safe, evidence-based, effective, *and necessary* is not controversial. If a medical doctor, or anyone else for that matter, ever discourages you from receiving chiropractic care, ask them what evidence their opinion is based on and to show you the research that supports their opinion. Unfortunately, personal bias, dogma, and unscientific opinion is common in health care. Do not let this get in your way of getting well.

Q - What If My Symptoms Are Not Going Away or I Am Feeling Worse?

A - If your spine has been subluxated for a prolonged period of time, it is normal for some irritation to occur along the path to recovery. Ice the area for 10 minutes a few times each day, and let Dr. Mark know so that he can make any necessary changes to your adjustments.

In more complicated cases, significant time and repetition may be needed to improve your condition. It is very important to be patient with your care. If it appears that chiropractic will not help with a specific symptom you are experiencing, Dr. Mark will refer you to another professional to get a fresh perspective on your problem. However, regardless of your symptoms, chiropractic care will still remain important to ensure your spinal health is maintained, and that any damage/arthritis in your spine is not allowed to progress.

Hunter Chiropractic Comprehension Quiz

Circle either True or False to the statements below to ensure that you understand the information explained in the Hunter Chiropractic Information Booklet.

1. True False Everyone can benefit from regular and consistent chiropractic care.
2. True False Uncorrected subluxations may cause permanent damage to your spine.
3. True False Healing of the spine takes time and repetition.
4. True False Kids should be adjusted regularly to ensure proper spinal development.
5. True False Chiropractic alone is all you need to do to keep your spine healthy.
6. True False Proper nutrition, good spinal motion, exercise, healthy thoughts and sufficient sleep are all required to be healthy.
7. True False Eating grains and drinking milk is required for us to be healthy.
8. True False When your pain is gone, this means that your spine is healthy.
9. True False To be healthy, our body requires regular exercise and substantial, daily movement.
10. True False Subluxations of the spine cause nerve interference to your body.
11. True False Prolonged sitting and poor posture are the most common causes of spinal health problems.
12. True False The three essential nutrients we need to supplement with are Vitamin D3, Omega 3 Fish Oil, and Non-dairy Probiotics.
13. True False The best time to be adjusted is when you start feeling pain.
14. True False Subluxations can develop silently on a daily basis from lifestyle stress.
15. True False Making chiropractic wellness care a non-negotiable part of your life will help keep your spine healthy throughout your life.

Please verify your answers with the correct answers at the bottom of this page. Note any that you have missed. If you would like to know why you missed any of these questions, please ask any one of us at Hunter Chiropractic Wellness Centre.

Answers: 1.T 2.T 3.T 4.T 5.F 6.T 7.F 8.F 9.T 10.T 11.T 12.T 13.F 14.T 15.T

