

General Information about Chiropractic Care

As evidence supporting the effectiveness of chiropractic continues to emerge, consumers are turning in large numbers to chiropractic care — a non-surgical, drug-free treatment option.

A few interesting facts on this increasingly popular form of health care:

- Chiropractic is the largest, most regulated, and best recognized of the complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) professions. It is the third largest doctoral-level health care profession after medicine and dentistry.
(Meeker, Haldeman; 2002; Annals of Internal Medicine)
- There are more than 60,000 active chiropractic licenses in the United States. All 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands officially recognize chiropractic as a health care profession.
- In 2002, approximately 7.4 percent of the population used chiropractic care – a higher percentage than yoga, massage, acupuncture or other diet-based therapies.
(Tindle HA, Davis RB, Phillips RS, Eisenberg DM. Trends in use of complementary and alternative medicine by US adults: 1997-2002. Altern Ther Health Med. 2005 Jan-Feb;11(1):42-9.)
- Doctors of Chiropractic undergo at least four years of professional study. The Council on Chiropractic Education, an agency certified by the Department of Education, currently recognizes 15 chiropractic programs at 18 different locations. In addition, Doctors of Chiropractic must pass national board examinations and become state-licensed prior to practicing.
- Doctors of Chiropractic provide care in hospitals and other multidisciplinary health care facilities. A few notable examples of chiropractic integration into today's health care system include the chiropractic department at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., and the care provided to veterans, active-duty military personnel, and Medicare patients.

Who is the typical Doctor of Chiropractic? *

- Nearly 82 percent of all doctors of chiropractic are in full-time practice, with the average chiropractor working between 40 to 45 hours per week.
- The majority (61 percent) of chiropractors work in an office in which they are the only doctor. Nearly one-third (31 percent) share an office with one or more chiropractors. The remaining doctors work in a multi-disciplinary setting, work in academia, or conduct research.
- According to data from 2003, 82 percent of chiropractic practitioners are male.

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Who is the typical chiropractic patient? *

- More than 35 percent of patients receiving chiropractic care were being treated for mid- or low-back pain, and almost 20 percent were being treated for neck pain. More than half of those surveyed said that their symptoms were chronic.

- Approximately 60 percent of all chiropractic patients are female.

- Conditions commonly treated by chiropractors include, but are not limited to, back pain, neck pain, headaches, sports injuries, motor vehicle accident injuries, and repetitive strains. Patients also seek treatment of pain associated with other conditions, such as arthritis.

** Some data provided by the 2005 Job Analysis of Chiropractic, which is published by the National Board of Chiropractic Examiners, www.nbce.org.*