

# Vienna Chiropractic Associates, P.C.

Your Down-to-Earth Alternative Since 1983

May–August 2008



## A Drug for Everything

All you have to do is watch TV for a few hours or flip through a magazine in the supermarket to get the sense that there is a drug for everything, including some conditions you didn't realize you had—until now! Hurry to your phone and call the toll-free number, so you can be hooked up with a source for the cure!

Contrary to popular belief, we are not “against” drugs. We are well aware that some drugs save lives, and we are thankful to have them. Please realize, however, that any substance with such a powerful potential for benefit also carries a powerful potential for harm. For this reason, the commercial forces pushing an incautious rush to the drug store concern us.

An example most people are familiar with by now has to do with antibiotics. While these drugs are often effective in fighting disease-causing germs, they can also wipe out beneficial microorganisms necessary for human health. In the long run, inappropriate antibiotic use can function as a eugenics program for rapidly mutating bacteria, creating the infamous “super-bugs” we're hearing about so much lately.

Less well-understood are the hazards of drugs for relief of back pain, neck pain, headache and other problems frequently related to spinal nerve dysfunction. Adverse reactions can wreak havoc with your digestion system; this is true even of the relatively mild over-the-counter drugs. More powerful prescription drugs can be hazardous to your vision, hearing,

reaction time, mental concentration and other functions. When a “cocktail” of more than one such drug is taken—whether self-administered or professionally prescribed—the potential for adverse reactions is multiplied.

Probably the most under-appreciated risk of painkilling drugs is psychological dependence or even physical addiction. This is especially relevant if you have a history of past substance abuse.

Where are we going with this? We just want to remind you that chiropractic works without drugs! Can we promise that you need never pop another pill? Of course not, but barring a life-threatening emergency, why drug a problem before trying a safer way to go?

It is the very essence of chiropractic to respect and support your body's natural workings without adding any toxic substances. That's a pretty big deal.

### Office Hours

Mon. ....	10:30 am–1:00 pm; 3:00 pm–7:30 pm	Fri. ....	8:30 am–1:00 pm; 3:00–6:30 pm
Tues. ....	3:00 pm–7:30 pm	Sat. ....	9:00 am–1:00 pm (We are usually open at least two Saturdays/month)
Wed. ....	10:30 am–1:00 pm; 3:00 pm–7:30 pm	Sun. ....	Office Closed
Thurs. ....	Office Closed		

For appointments, please call 703-938-6441. If we are closed, or away from the desk, you will be able to leave a message. If you are having trouble reaching us by cell phone from certain areas (including certain areas within Vienna) please try again.

### Office Calendar

<b>May</b>	<b>August</b>
10, 31.....Open for Saturday hours	2, 16.....Open for Saturday Hours
19 .....Chiropractic Independence Day	18 .....Chiropractic Independence Day
26 .....Office Closed for Memorial Day	<b>September</b>
<b>June</b>	1 .....Labor Day – Office Closed
7, 14, 28 .Open for Saturday Hours	6, 20.....Open for Saturday Hours
16 .....Chiropractic Independence Day	15 .....Chiropractic Independence Day
<b>July</b>	
4 .....Nat. Ind. Day – Office Closed	
12, 26.....Open for Saturday Hours	
21 .....Chiropractic Independence Day	

**Note:** We are making every effort to provide you with an accurate calendar. However, each newsletter covers a period of four months. Unforeseen circumstances during this time period may require minor changes.

# Talk to Us

## **Moved? Moving?**

Please help us mail you the things you want mailed by making sure we have your correct address. If it's been a while since we've seen each other, you may have forgotten there was a move in there at some point.

## **Changed Your Number?**

As in the case above, it's easy to forget a change in phone number, either at home or in the office. While we make every effort to have a good place to call, we need your help, especially for those, "I've got a 10.5 pain, call me back, I'll be here an hour" calls, which often, in your distress, don't include a phone number. HIPAA agrees with us that we also need to be updated on where we can call you and with whom we can leave a message.

## **Got Married? Divorced?**

This one's an extension of the above. If your marital/home status has changed since you filled out your "permission to call" form, we need to know if it's OK to speak to the stranger on the other end of the line (even if we've met them before!).

## **Fender-Bender? More?**

If you've been in a crash, even a fender-bender, we need to know for your own good. We have to do a few brief tests, at the least, if only to see if we need to change technique or have your x-ray "portrait" done. Please tell us about it when you make your appointment so we give you enough time. If you are coming in for a previously scheduled appointment, call us with enough time beforehand in case we feel you'll need more

than the scheduled fifteen minutes.

## **Please, Oh Please, Oh Please!**

If we haven't seen you for a while, you may be asked to fill out an "Update" form. Please humor us. Even though in your head nothing has changed, if it's been a while, we not only don't have all your "numbers," there may be health

information we don't have that would impact on what we see in the office or the techniques we choose for you on that day. Thanks!

## **Aunt Wilma Wants Your Password?**

Please tell her she doesn't have to hack into your computer just to read our newsletter on a regular basis. Not only is it on our website—[www.neurologicalfitness.com](http://www.neurologicalfitness.com)—but we'd be happy to e-mail it to her or any of your friends. Just provide their e-mail address and we'll put them on our mailing list.

## **Spinal Stenosis**

Originally, this term was used to describe a condition in which the spinal canal (the space protected by the vertebrae in which the spinal cord floats) undergoes narrowing (stenosis) due to calcium deposits in the walls of the canal. This increases pressure on the cord and can lead to numbness or pain in the back or legs, weakness of the muscles, and even degeneration of the organs. It is most serious in those born with congenitally narrowed spinal canals, and tends to get worse with age.

In the last few years, we have seen other conditions being lumped into the diagnosis of spinal stenosis. For example, certain canals or openings do not house the spinal cord, but do house portions of individual spinal nerves. These smaller canals are called "foramina." Like the larger spinal canal, these foramina can experience narrowing, creating pressure on the individual spinal nerves. Arthritic spurs, bulging or herniated discs, and vertebral misalignment or restriction (subluxation) can all create or contribute to this narrowing. This process is often called "spinal stenosis" these days, but is more properly referred to as "foraminal encroachment." Foraminal encroachment can mimic the symptoms of classical spinal stenosis, and is far more common. Also, the two conditions can aggravate each other when they exist in the same individual.

By freeing vertebrae to move in patterns less stressful to the cord and spinal nerves, the chiropractic adjustment can offer a non-surgical, non-pharmaceutical approach for many victims of both foraminal encroachment and spinal stenosis. We do not expect adjustments to get rid of congenital narrowing, irreversible disc degeneration, or long-established calcium deposits and arthritic spurs. However, many people with spinal stenosis or foraminal encroachment find they have less pain, more mobility, more good days, fewer bad days, and a life that is more livable under chiropractic care.

# “Wind”

The ability to take a comfortable, deep breath affects many aspects of life. For an athlete, it almost goes without saying that loss of “wind” can mean the difference between victory and defeat in competition. For a singer or a player of a wind instrument, difficult breathing can noticeably mar a musical performance. For a politician, a trial lawyer, a business leader, a public speaker, a teacher or a sales rep, weak breathing can produce a weak voice, and a weak voice can inadvertently convey a weak message.

A small Australian study found that full, deep breathing and spinal mobility may be closely related.<sup>1</sup> A group of young adults with no known respiratory diseases received manipulation to mobilize all of the spinal joints from the lower neck to the middle back. Lung volumes were recorded by having the volunteers blow into a device called a “spirometer.” This was done one minute before and one minute after the manipulation. There was significant improvement in lung volumes after manipulation.

Another group demonstrated a temporary decrease in lung volumes after treadmill exercise. This probably resulted from a transient increase in the resistance of the breathing pathways in response to the stress of exercise.

More interesting was a third group

of volunteers that received both treadmill exercise and manipulation. These volunteers had improved lung volumes after manipulation, followed by even better volumes after treadmill exercise. Apparently, spinal manipulation not only made breathing easier, but also mitigated the short-term respiratory stress of exercise.

The findings of the Australian study are consistent with our own, although we work a bit differently. Here at Vienna Chiropractic, we assess each individual spinal joint for misalignment or restriction (subluxation). We then adjust the subluxated joint as specifically as possible to relieve stress on the spinal nerves. Our intention is maximum benefit with minimum disturbance.

In 1986, we recorded two types of lung volume measurements on 50 consecutive new patients.<sup>2</sup> This was done on the initial visit and then repeated at the progress examination after four to six visits. None of these patients were coming to us for respiratory problems. They were seeking chiropractic care for the typical musculoskeletal complaints—back pain, neck pain, tension headache, etc.

The group of patients as a whole experienced significant improvement, with lung volumes improving an average of more than 5% on one of the measurements, and an average of more than 8%

on the other. In discussing our results, we speculated that chiropractic adjustments might help people continue to breathe well during the stress of exercise. In this sense, we anticipated the results of the recent Australian study by 24 years.

Following this project, we published three additional papers on improved breathing under chiropractic care.<sup>3,4,5</sup> In 2001, we summarized the profession’s contributions to this field in one of our textbook’s chapters.<sup>6</sup>

As in all fields, research must continue. However, these preliminary results indicate that people seeking relief from neck pain, back pain and headache through chiropractic care may experience a benefit not reportedly delivered by pain pills—improved “wind.”

## References

1. R.M. Engel, Vemulpad, S. “The Effect of Combining Manual Therapy with Exercise on the Respiratory Function of Normal Individuals: A Randomized Control Trial.” *J Manipulative Physiol Ther*, 2007; 30: 509-513.
2. C.S. Masarsky, Weber, M. “Chiropractic and Lung Volumes – A Retrospective Study.” *ACA J of Chiropractic*, 1986; 20(9): 65-68.
3. C.S. Masarsky, Weber, M. “Chiropractic Management of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease.” *J Manipulative Physiological Ther*, 1988; 11: 505-510.
4. C.S. Masarsky, Weber, M. “Screening Spirometry in the Chiropractic Examination.” *ACA J of Chiropractic*, 1989; 23(2): 67-68.
5. C.S. Masarsky, Weber, M. “Somatic Dyspnea and the Orthopedics of Respiration.” *Chiropractic Technique*, 1991; 3(1): 26-29.
6. C.S. Masarsky, Todres-Masarsky, M. “Breathing and the Vertebral Subluxation Complex.” In C.S. Masarsky, M. Todres-Masarsky (Editors). Somatovisceral Aspects of Chiropractic: An Evidence-Based Approach. Churchill Livingstone, New York, 2001.

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## What Is Chiropractic Independence Day?

In an effort to make chiropractic care affordable to everyone, we set aside selected Mondays as Chiropractic Independence Days. On Chiropractic Independence Day, there are no set fees (except for Medicare patients, whose fees are

mandated by Federal Law). Your decision to seek chiropractic care is independent of your insurance coverage or income level. Payment (which goes anonymously into a box at the front desk) is based on what you feel the care is worth, modified by your ability to pay.

We do accept new patients on Chiro-

practic Independence Day, provided there is room in the schedule, making this an excellent time to introduce friends, co-workers, and loved ones to chiropractic care.

Independence Day appointments are in heavy demand, so reserve yours early.

## Take Five (Seconds)

If you are having trouble finding a block of time to put together a full-scale workout, you can put a little movement into your idle moments. There are lots of little spaces in almost anyone's day that are sufficient to remind your body it was meant to move and balance. Among these are: waiting for the kettle to boil or the microwave to produce a cup of tea, waiting for your answering machine to tell you who is on the phone before you get involved with the Queen of Telemarketers, waiting for your dial-up connection to actually connect or waiting for that commercial you feel insults your intelligence to be over. That's right, you're waiting and you could have woken up your body.

What kind of exercise can you do in that time? You can balance on either foot for five seconds, do five hip extensions or flexions,

or practice better posture. At the desk, you can work your quads, your arms or go back to that healthier posture. If you have time to do a little more, go for it. Meanwhile you've taken perhaps dozens of annoying little snags in time and put them to work for better health. It's probably not sufficient preparation for the Olympics, but enough to get you healthier and a lot less stiff.

## Thank You for Your Referrals

Our practice includes people from all walks of life and all stages of life from childhood to retirement. In our opinion, competently and safely caring for this diverse group of people requires a one-on-one approach. Unfortunately, today's health care environment frequently steers people towards a factory-like, one-size-fits-all concept, and is certainly not sup-

portive of our style of individualized care. For a practice like ours, referral is the most important source of new patients. That's why we're taking a moment to thank all of you who have referred over the years, making it possible for us to practice the art of chiropractic the way we do. We appreciate your trust.

We have a number of ways to assist you in making your future referrals. If your friend, co-worker, or loved one would like to quietly observe your next adjustment, we are happy to oblige. If they prefer, they can see a chiropractic adjustment performed in the privacy of their own home by borrowing our DVD. If they have questions for us, invite them to call for a 15-minute phone consultation – no charge, no obligation. In the meantime, share this newsletter, and invite them to visit [www.neurologicalfitness.com](http://www.neurologicalfitness.com).

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## No, You Really Can't and Probably Shouldn't Try to Get the Whole Garden Done in One Day

You can get a start, you can do it in chunks or layers, but if you try to start at 6:00 AM and end at 8:00 PM on a warm spring day, you're probably

going to wish there was a "chiro-signal" (remember the "bat signal"?), so we would know to come get you out of your yard and standing straight.

Gardening is a pleasure, and exercise, a creative activity. Please don't turn it into an endurance contest instead of enjoying it.

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## News

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*Address Correction Requested*

