

Chiropractic And Duration Of Chronic Neck Pain

The December 2005 issue of the journal *Clinical Chiropractic* highlights a pilot study designed to find out how people who experienced long-term, chronic neck pain respond to chiropractic care compared to those who experienced more short-term problems.

The authors point out that more than 70% of people in the developed nations will experience neck problems at some point. They were alarmed at the high economic and human costs that result from neck pain and the fact that there are no standard care protocols.

This preliminary study was designed to find out if people experiencing long-term problems would require more chiropractic care than those with short-term ones.

Twenty-one people starting chiropractic care were placed in two groups. One group had problems of more than 7 weeks duration and the other had problems of less than 7 weeks duration. Both groups were assessed with the Bournemouth Questionnaire for neck pain which measures pain, disability, and perceptions of improvements in the patient's quality of life, levels of anxiety, and depression.

The study found out that while chiropractic care had a positive effect on all of the patients' neck pain, the long-term duration patients did indeed require more care than those experiencing short-term problems.

Commentary: While it comes as no surprise that patients with long-term problems require more care than those with short-term problems, it's good to see research that supports the notion. Sometimes in our we-want-it-now culture we forget that problems of long duration will simply take longer to fix. All the better reason to find and correct spinal problems early, before they become symptomatic from the resulting disruption of normal function and health.