



Family Wellness First

Designed for Hope: How Chiropractic Honors the Health Already Within Your Child

As chiropractors, we are confident that your child can live a healthy and abundant life. Chiropractic itself is based on hope...hope that you and your children are designed for health. In order to help your children be healthy, you need to think less about sickness (what is wrong with their bodies) and more about health (how to help them express their personal inner health potential).

Health is not the absence of disease. That is a simple statement that has very important implications for the sake of your kids. If your M.D. doesn't know that true health comes from within—that you were designed to be healthy—then he doesn't know where to find health, and is only concerned with treating sickness.

Maybe you've already resigned yourself to accept a lifetime of doctor visits and drugs for yourself, but I'm certain that you want something better for your children. They are not destined for sickness and disease. A culture of cynicism and distrust in the body seems to pervade the practice of medicine. Please don't allow it to affect the way you view their precious birthright to be healthy. Ask a chiropractor why we are certain that your child has a natural ability to be healthy, and you might be pleasantly surprised by hope!

Chiropractors teach people how to take better care of themselves using the basic principles of nutrition, exercise, stress management, proper sleep, social connections and spinal health...and leave it up to each person how to live out those principles. We like to say, "Healthy living is not living according to someone else's prescription, but according to innate principles." To use principles to guide our decisions and behaviors means that we must take responsibility for ourselves and our children, taking "the road less traveled." And yet if you were to follow the more common path of "prescription living," you would find yourself walking on a well-worn trail behind the majority of people in our culture. It's the path of least resistance.



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Your doctor may not be at fault, but he or she doesn't have the answers for your family's health. The truth is that we are on a journey of discovery together. Research continues to confirm many of the principles that chiropractors have been advocating since the profession began in 1895, but as we continually reevaluate what it means to "live naturally" or "live by design," careful analysis has helped us to refine those principles. With today's rapid exchange of communication, the different schools of thought regarding natural living are now converging, as we discover that there is broad agreement with one another and with modern science. It is an exciting time for the chiropractic profession, as research confirms our fundamental trust in nature.

We are living in the golden age of neurological research. Since the early '90s, our understanding of brain function has grown by leaps and bounds. For instance, we used to think that the brain you are born with is the brain you are stuck with, and no new neurons were ever added. Now we know that we add new neurons our entire lives and new connections between them as well. This process, called neuroplasticity, is driven by input, mainly sensory input. Of all sensory input, the one thing we can sense 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, is gravity and its effects on muscle and joint receptors. This input is called proprioception.

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The largest source of proprioceptive input is the spinal column and related structures.

As the brain develops, this proprioceptive input is matched with input from the eyes and vestibular canals in the ears to develop a spatial map of our body in its environment. This forms the basis of motor development skills: rolling over, sitting up, crawling and walking. Once we have reached the level of walking upright, we have laid the foundation for cognitive development and speech starts.

So what does that have to do with health and chiropractic? Apparently everything!

When the motion between two vertebrae is restricted due to a misalignment, movement signals are reduced to the brain. Those signals are essential for normal brain function and development. Some believe that movement signals coming from the spine may be the most important information required by the brain. The subluxation (misalignment) is a bottleneck for the constant sensory traffic that normally provides these signals. The “language” of exercise and movement is translated by the brain as your desire to live and thrive. Ignore a vertebral subluxation and you are telling the rest of your body that its services are no longer

automatic part of your brain that controls the rest of your body that its services are no longer needed. Chiropractic helps restore the sensory traffic to and from the brain by correcting vertebral subluxations

Chiropractic works with a respect for your child's innate potential, helping to restore the spinal pathways to and from the brain and guiding your family toward what it means to live according to nature's design. Your chiropractor wants to stand alongside of you and encourage your children to live up to their personal potential.

Our goal as chiropractors is to help parents transfer their trust in doctors, drugs and other therapies, that all come from the outside-in, and place that trust in nature's potential that comes from the inside-out!

A pediatric chiropractor is trained to help you look for those things that have interfered with your child's optimal function. Chiropractors don't just believe that your child has unlimited potential— our job is to unlock it.

Modified excerpt from: *Designed for Hope: How Chiropractic Honors the Health Already Within Your Child* by Nick Spano, DC. Read more in *Pathways* at pathwaystofamilywellness.org

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