

# Dr. Colin Gage \* Dr. Duane Drobot

---

Nicola Valley Chiropractic  
1949 Quilchena Ave.  
P.O. Box 909  
Merritt, BC  
V1K 1B8

Ph: (250) 378-5456  
Fax:(250) 378-8259  
Email: info@merrittchiro.com  
Website: www.merrittchiro.com

---

*"treating the cause of your problem, not just the symptoms"*

---

## Need a New Mattress?

Each week numerous patients ask me what type of mattress they should purchase. The answer is not all that simple. Not only do different people's body weights vary considerably, but also each person has his or her body weight distributed differently.

Most of the people in my office who are looking for input on what mattress to buy are usually suffering from low back pain. Having a chronic sore back usually means that it can be uncomfortable during the day and night. This means that a sore back can interfere with getting a restful night of sleep. Studies have shown that 50% of people with low back pain do suffer from sleep problems. The other symptoms related to inadequate sleep can then make your life even more miserable. A word of caution is also necessary here as well. If you have a good quality and not too old mattress, having a bout of low back pain should not be solely attributed to just the mattress. If you have been sleeping on that same mattress for the past three years without experiencing any back pain, why would the same mattress start causing you problems now? There may be other factors at play that you have not thought of -recent weight gain, straining your back at work, fairly recent lack of exercise, etc. When considering purchasing a mattress primarily because your low back is sore, rule out other possible causes of the problems first. Your Chiropractor can help you with this.

There are numerous reasons why you should buy a new mattress. Of course, if you can get a high quality one at a darn good price, go for it. You spend a large portion of your life in bed. If you are going to splurge on anything, it should be a good mattress. A firm mattress is sometimes better for a fairly heavy person (185 lbs or more). They should replace that soft mattress that they sink into with a slightly firmer one. A softer mattress can be beneficial for some people with chronic diseases like diabetes or blood clotting deficiencies. They should not use a very firm bed as too much pressure on their skin from a very firm bed can cause bruising or skin sores. If there are sunken spots in the mattress, it needs to be replaced. It will not give you the even support you require. Most chiropractors and back specialists recommend not using a waterbed. They are not designed to give the support your body needs. The

bottom line is that when you are sleeping, you want your spine to be in a neutral position. For example, when lying on your back, you do not want the areas of greatest pressure from your body weight, such as your hips and shoulders, to sink too far into the mattress. This will cause your lower back to arch and inevitably lead to problems.

Keeping these thoughts in mind, it really comes down to your, and often your spouse's, personal preference (don't forget that his or her needs in a mattress may be quite different from yours). In general, I do not recommend a very soft or water-type bed. It is my opinion that a medium to firm bed is usually the safest bet. To find out which one you prefer, take the time to lay down on a few different ones in the store.

In closing, once you have a good mattress, be sure to rotate and flip it regularly. All good mattresses come with instructions on how to do this systematically. If you don't do this, sunken spots will gradually appear and you will have to replace it.