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

Experiencing Bouts of Mid-Back Pain?

Over the past five years of practicing chiropractic in Merritt, I have come across five or six patients with a very different type of back pain. These patients were experiencing severe bouts of mid-back pain for no apparent reason. They did not experience any form of trauma, such as a car accident, and they did not try to lift something they should not have. Through physical examinations, x-rays, and blood tests, it was determined that they had a disease called "Ankylosing Spondylitis". It is commonly referred to as "AS".

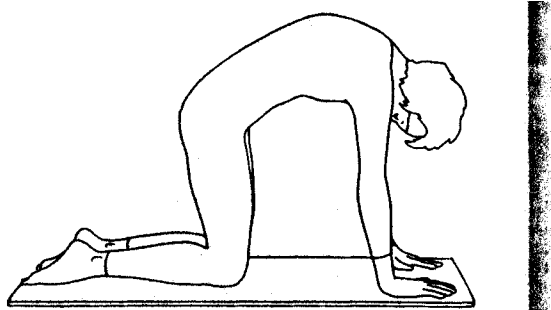
Ankylosing Spondylitis afflicts one in one hundred males and one in two hundred fifty females, most commonly between the ages of fifteen to thirty-five. Although nobody knows for sure why, bouts of inflammation occur in the joints of the spine and pelvis. Each bout can last from days to months. The inflammation erodes small amounts of the bone in the joints. Once the inflammation subsides, the body responds by forming new bone in the eroded areas. This happens over and over again. Over time, too much new bone can be formed and the joints become partially or completely fused. This can drastically reduce the mobility in a person's spine or pelvis.

If left untreated, the disease can eventually cause severe disability. Therefore, it is important to see your chiropractor or medical doctor early. If diagnosed early, there are some conservative forms of treatment that have shown to be very successful. Being very faithful to a specific daily exercise program is a must. The exercises are designed to prevent the joints from becoming progressively stiff or immobile. A few of the exercises are listed below. Gentle chiropractic treatment for early stages of AS will also assist in maintaining and restoring joint mobility. Anti-inflammatory medications can help decrease the inflammation and bone erosion. It is also very important to maintain good posture. An explanation of what good posture is can be found on our website (www.merrittchiro.com) under "weekly articles". If the joints become very stiff or even fused, most people adopt a stooped posture. If your posture is poor to begin with, this may make the stooped posture of AS even worse.

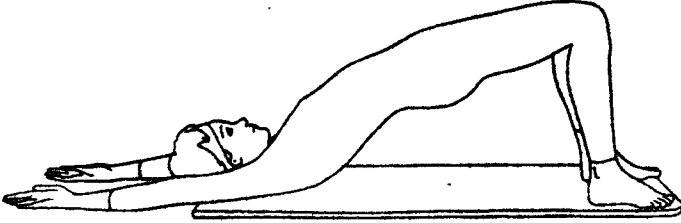
Sit in a chair or on a bench with both feet flat on the floor. Rotate your head and chest to one side, so that at least one hand touches the back of your chair. Keep your feet planted.



On your hands and knees, pull your belly button up into your spine and round your spine completely – lower back, shoulders, and neck (let your head drop).



Lie on your back as shown. Slowly raise your pelvis toward the ceiling and hold for five seconds. Keep breathing normally. Then slowly lower the pelvis to the ground again. Repeat this ten times.



Lie on your back as shown. Slowly raise your pelvis toward the ceiling and hold for five seconds. Keep breathing normally. Then slowly lower the pelvis to the ground again. Repeat this ten times.

If you have bouts of pain in the mid-back, see your chiropractor so that a diagnosis can be made. If you would like more exercises, log onto our website (www.merrittchiro.com) or call me at my office.