

# Dr. Colin Gage

---

Nicola Valley Chiropractic  
2076A Granite 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"*

---

## **The Reality is....**

Rarely a day goes by that I don't have a new patient in my office with neck or low back pain. Surprisingly, many of these people truly believe that when they go to see a chiropractor, massage therapist, or physiotherapist that a "quick fix" is readily available. Even though I have personally witnessed many people make incredible improvements with only a single chiropractic treatment, promising that to every patient would be unethical.

In most cases, regardless of the type of practitioner or their preferred treatment, correcting a physical problem often requires a series of treatments. In any injury, there are a few phases that a person must pass through. First, there is the "acute" phase. This is the initial period of time immediately after the injury where there is lots of inflammation, pain, muscle spasm, etc. Second, there is the "healing" phase. This is when your body is healing itself. There are no medications that can do this for you. Third, there is the "rehabilitative" phase. This is after the pain and other symptoms have subsided and the injured area is strengthened or rehabilitated. It is important to understand that even though the pain is gone at this stage, the area is still vulnerable to re-injury.

Although many people would disagree, a lack of pain does not mean that you are healthy or a problem has been completely fixed. Eliminating the "pain" or symptoms is only one of the necessary steps to a full recovery. The theory "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" is ridiculous no matter what you apply it to. What I am getting at is that an absence of pain or simply "feeling better" does not mean that you should discontinue your treatment and assume you are 100%. I once had an elderly patient tell me that when I "assume" something, I will eventually make an "ass" out of him and "me". With that in mind, follow through with a practitioner's treatment recommendations so that you fully rehabilitate your injury. This will prevent the problem from re-occurring.

Another important point is that even after you fully recover from an injury, you must make the necessary changes so that it doesn't happen again. For example, if you slipped in the tub and sprained your shoulder, put a non-slip mat in the bottom of the tub. But what if your low back is sore from your job -sitting all day while driving or working at a desk? Do you simply quit your job? I would think not. In this instance, you must do

more to look after yourself so that your body can tolerate the physical stress your job creates. You may have to exercise more, work less, lose weight, see your chiropractor more often, etc. None of these are easy things to do. But, you can't expect your chiropractor, or any other practitioner, to fix your problem and keep it that way when you are not willing to reduce or compensate for the aggravating factors that are creating your problem in the first place.