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

Got Arthritis? See Your Chiropractor!

Overall, 46 million Americans suffer with either self-reported, or physician-diagnosed arthritis. That number is expected to climb to 67 million by 2030 as the population ages. Arthritis is the most common cause of disability with 19 million adults in the United States reporting that they suffered activity limitation due to arthritis between 2003 and 2005. In those aged 18—64 about one in twenty adults suffered work limitations due to arthritis, and in one-third of those with arthritis. Annual hospitalizations due to arthritis number approximately 750,000, with 35 million outpatient visits, also due to arthritis. Complications from arthritis account for about 9,500 deaths annually. The estimated annual cost to the health care system is \$128 billion. Ouch! Tell me those statistics aren't depressing! However, don't worry, this article is not all bad news.

Bringing chiropractic into the discussion of arthritis adds a dimension that opens up possibilities for maintaining an active lifestyle. It provides not only a possible resolution of chronic pain, but also the potential for addressing the disease with more flexible methods that focus on long-term health. For most of the twentieth century, many people believed that the diagnosis of arthritis necessarily came with the dreaded anticipation that normal activities would become a part of a *previous* life. With chiropractic and the benefits it provides, arthritis can become a manageable ailment that, along with exercise and a healthy diet, will no longer be feared.

The basis for Chiropractic care is centered in the body's ability to heal itself. By normalizing the mobility of the joints and muscles, a chiropractor helps increase the range of motion in the body, which assists in better overall movement. Chiropractic and its complementary treatments, which include nutrition, exercise, and better lifestyle choices, can be used as a preventive measure against potentially developing arthritis. If arthritis is already present, chiropractic's use of manipulation can result in greater ease of movement and decreased fluid build up in the joints that often accompanies arthritic conditions. The use of massage in addition to chiropractic care can also ease stiffness and encourage movement. As well, the application of heat and cold presses has been shown to ease arthritic pain. And finally, the use of electrical stimulation in chiropractic treatment is believed to stimulate pain-inhibiting chemicals in the human body, also known as endorphins, and block the nerve fibers that are responsible for pain.

Using chiropractic instead of prescription medicines for pain relief, or over-the-counter medications such as NSAIDs (Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs), can reduce the chances of experiencing harmful side effects from long-term use. It offers a non-invasive method of maintaining physical health and addresses such conditions as arthritis in a way that will offer freedom of movement without the deteriorating effects that might come with medication.