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Back Pain The Spinal Trap!

The title of this newsletter says it all. How do you solve your back pain problem? Well don't ask your medical doctor, because they have no answer except for drugs and surgery. You are probably asking yourself why I say this. This weekend's New York Times Magazine written by Gretchen Reynolds, Ph.D. had a poignant article entitled "Spinal Trap": How do you solve back pain? Don't ask your doctor. This article made some strong statements to the fact that 80 percent of us will experience low back pain some time in our lifetime. It also pointed out that for the past 10 years the most popular nonsurgical medical treatment for "chronic, nonspecific" low back pain problems has been injection therapy such as nerve blocks using local anesthetics and cortisone.

The treatment as stated is "disproportionately escalating rate" of use according to Dr. Janna Friedly, back specialist and assistant professor of rehabilitation medicine at University of Washington, Seattle, because of it relatively easy to administer, less invasive the surgery, provide some pain relief for a couple of weeks for some patient and is profitable for physicians. Article published in May in The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA), research shows no evidence that the shots ease most people's pain long term. One study showed that patients with "pinched nerves" in their back showed less improvement after injection therapy then control group during a four-year follow up study. The conclusion of this study was that doctors "should not" recommend injection therapy to their patients with chronic low back pain.

Though this article was very informative and spoke about various methods of treating chronic low back pain it left out the most important one, chiropractic care and even more important applied kinesiology techniques. A book I have in my library and read it in 1985, Backache Relief, Times Books could be considered the "ultimate second opinion", because it consisted of a national survey of suffers of every type of back ailment. It was designed to document the relative effectiveness of more than 100 different types of practitioners, treatments, and self-help methods. This book was published by The New York Times Books, ISBN #0-8129-1155-5, however I don't know if it is still available. Authors are Arthur C. Klein a writer and market researcher and Dava Sobel a then science writer for The New York Times.

The idea for this book, which I would highly recommend to anyone who has chronic back pain, came from Arthur Klein who suffered his first acute back pain with back spasms at age 18. At this point he started trying to treat himself by buying a bed board, a special writer's chair, after college he started exercise all to no avail. Later on he tried medical doctors, an internist, two orthopedists, neurologist, doctor of physical medicine (physiatrist), a chiropractor and a physical therapist. These experiences motivated him to carry out the research for this book.

The information, ratings and advice in Backache Relief are based on the results of the most extensive survey of back sufferers ever under taken. Again I highly recommend that you obtain a copy of this book if possible and read it for yourself.

My own experience is a parallel of Mr. Klein's experiences, with my back pain problems starting at 17 years old. I had started weight training in freshman year of high school at age 14 and injured my back while squatting. My low back pain and weakness went on through college and even Chiropractic College, until my last year in chiropractic clinic, when I severely injured my back squatting with about 350 lbs.

I had severe sciatic neuritis and could hardly walk. I was still in chiropractic clinic and worked as a waiter in room service and banquet department at the Pierre Hotel in NYC. If it were not for chiropractic care I would not been able to complete my training and help support my then pregnant wife. I had obviously injured the L5-S1 disc and if it were for chiropractic care I would probably still have back problem.

The New York Times article by Gretchen Reynolds, while informative, failed to even mention chiropractic care as a viable treatment method for chronic back pain. The reason I mentioned the Arthur Klein and Dava Sobel book *Backache Relief* was it through coverage of 100 different types of treatments and the patient's experiences with the success, failure and shortcomings of each method. It brought to light the efficacy of chiropractic and physiatrists method for treating chronic low back pain. But important in this book on page 50 talked about Kinesiologist with their special training in muscles and movement, these specialists all alleviate many kinds of back pain.

Mr. Klein points out, that the eight kinesiologists seen in this survey were chiropractors who had received an additional degree in kinesiology-the study of the mechanic and anatomy of movement. I am now quoting "They were able to help the participants, which is impressive considering that all of these patients were severely limited by low back pain, sciatic, or a ruptured disc".

"One disabled back sufferer, a health educator, was in severe pain during the five years that she saw chiropractors, orthopedists, neurosurgeons, and physical therapists. After a few months of treatment by a kinesiologist/chiropractor, she made a complete recovery".

If you are interest in reading this week's article (7/21/13) article of the New York Times call my office at 973-334-6053 or email me a reply at (pauls42@optonline.net) when you receive this newsletter and I can send you a copy.

Finally you can learn more about this type of problem from previous newsletter/health bulletins, which you can read on my web site paulsprieser.com, click tool bar patient information and look to the right side of the page. You can print these files out #13-Low back pain, #14-Pelvic pain, #15-Ileocecal valve syndrome, and #42-Uneven stride length.