

Gallup-Palmer College of Chiropractic Annual Report Americans' Views of Prescription Pain Medication and Chiropractic Care





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Executive Summary

Neck and Back Pain

- Nearly two-thirds of adults in the United States (63%) have had neck or back pain significant enough that they saw a healthcare professional for care at some point in their lifetime.
- More than half (54%) of those who saw a healthcare professional for care for significant neck or back pain in the last 12 months have had an ongoing problem with neck or back pain for five years or more.

Drug-Free Pain Management

- Most adults in the United States prefer drug-free pain management. Given a choice, 78% of U.S. adults prefer to try other ways to address physical pain before they take pain medication prescribed by a doctor, while 22% prefer to take pain medication prescribed by a doctor to treat physical pain.
- Adults with a high school diploma or less education (31%), adults with an annual household income under \$35,000 (32%), adults over 65 years old (33%), black adults (35%), and adults who have never been to a chiropractor (26%) are among the subgroups most likely to prefer prescription pain medication to treat physical pain; however, majorities in all of these groups still say they prefer to try other ways to treat physical pain.
- The chiropractic profession has an opportunity to position itself as a drug-free option for pain management. Eight out of 10 adults in the United States (81%) think chiropractic care can help a great deal (41%) or help some (40%) with back and neck pain.
- U.S. adults believe chiropractic care is safer than prescription pain medication is for patients with significant neck or back pain. Adults with a high school diploma or less education (25%), adults over 65 years old (20%), and adults who have never been to a chiropractor (18%) are less likely than those in other subgroups to say chiropractic care is safer than prescription pain medication.
- Adults in the United States are also slightly more likely to say chiropractic care is more effective than prescription pain medication is for patients with significant neck or back pain.

Knowledge of Chiropractic Care

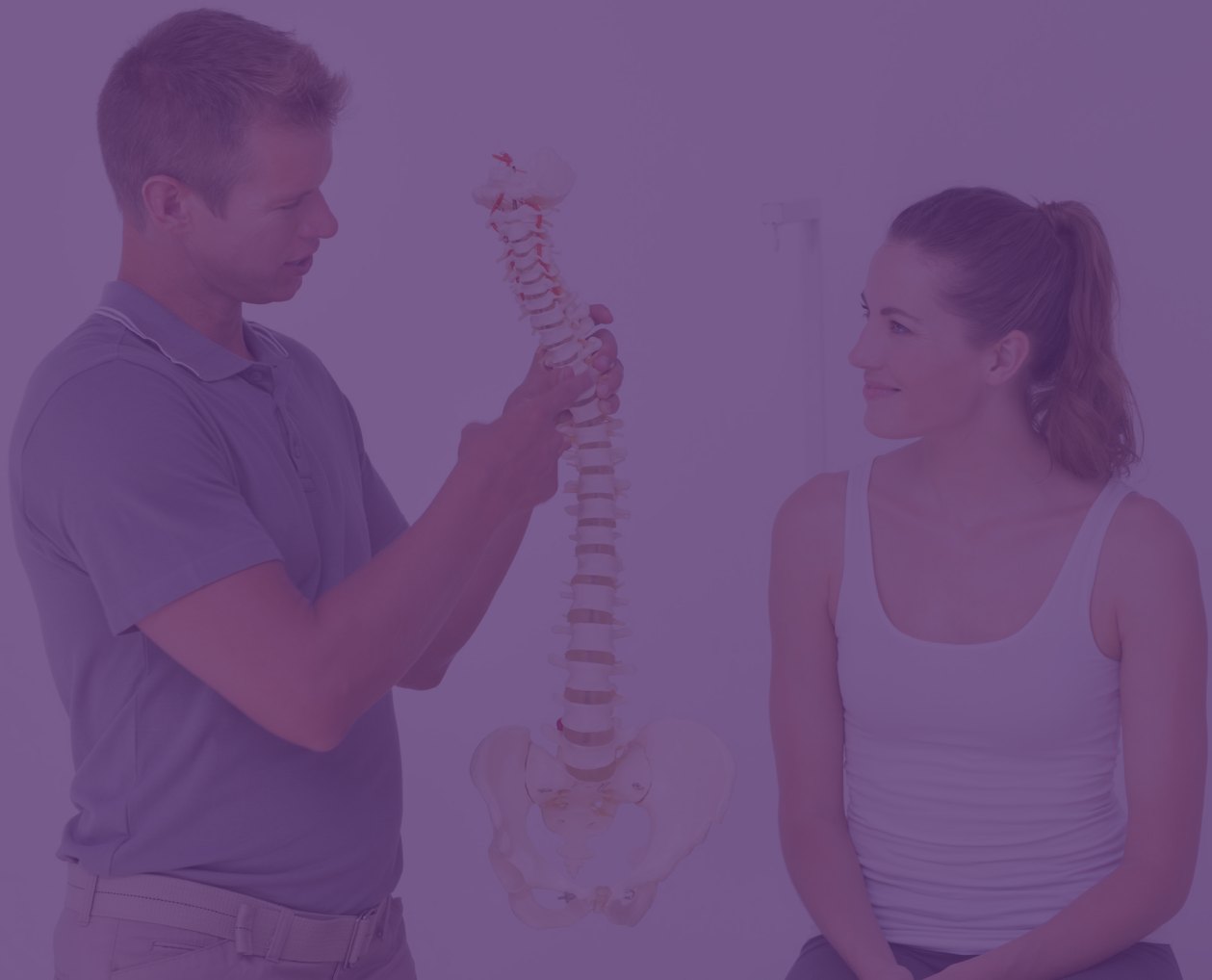
- Adults in the U.S. are not highly knowledgeable about chiropractic care. Half of adults in the United States (50%) do not know the philosophies that guide chiropractic care. Adults under 35 years old (57%) and black adults (65%) are the most likely to say they do not know the philosophies that guide chiropractic care.
- Among U.S. adults, 18% went to a chiropractor in the last 12 months. Nearly half of adults who have not seen a chiropractor for care in the last 12 months (47%) say they would be more likely to go to a chiropractor for care if they knew more about what chiropractors do.
- Blacks (61%) and young adults (62%) are more likely than other demographic groups to say they would visit a chiropractor if they knew more about what chiropractors do.
- Three in 10 adults in the United States say the main reason more people don't go to a chiropractor is that they lack information about the chiropractic profession.

Collaboration on Care

- Chiropractic patients and nonpatients alike favor collaboration between chiropractors and other doctors. More than two-thirds of adults in the United States who have not seen a chiropractor for care in the last 12 months (68%) say they would be more likely to go to a chiropractor for care if they knew their chiropractor would work closely with their other doctors. Last year's *Gallup-Palmer College of Chiropractic Annual Report: Americans' Perceptions of Chiropractic* found that more than two-thirds of adults in the United States who have seen a chiropractor for care in the last 12 months (71%) want their chiropractor to work closely with their other doctors to collaborate on their healthcare.

Insurance Coverage for Chiropractic Care

- Lack of insurance coverage costs chiropractic patients. Chiropractic patients without insurance for chiropractic care pay nearly twice as much for a typical chiropractic appointment as do those with insurance for chiropractic care.
- In addition, 60% of chiropractic patients have insurance coverage for chiropractic care, but only 46% of chiropractic patients say insurance paid for at least some of their chiropractic care.
- The main reasons given by chiropractic patients who had to pay out-of-pocket expenses for their chiropractic care are that their chiropractor is out-of-network or their deductible or copay has not been met yet.



Introduction

In 2015, Palmer College of Chiropractic commissioned Gallup to conduct an annual study of Americans' attitudes about and experiences with chiropractor care. The 2017 *Gallup-Palmer College of Chiropractic Annual Report: Americans' Views of Prescription Pain Medication and Chiropractic Care* details the results of the third annual Gallup-Palmer study. This report highlights findings on the prevalence of significant neck and back pain, perceptions of prescription pain management, and the use and costs of chiropractic care in the United States.

The results are based on a nationally representative Gallup Panel™ web and mail study completed by 6,305 national adults aged 18 or older, with 5,826 completions from the web and 479 from mail. This study was conducted from Feb. 8-March 13, 2017.

Gallup Panel Web and Mail Study

6,305

national adults aged 18 or older completed the study

5,826

completions from the web

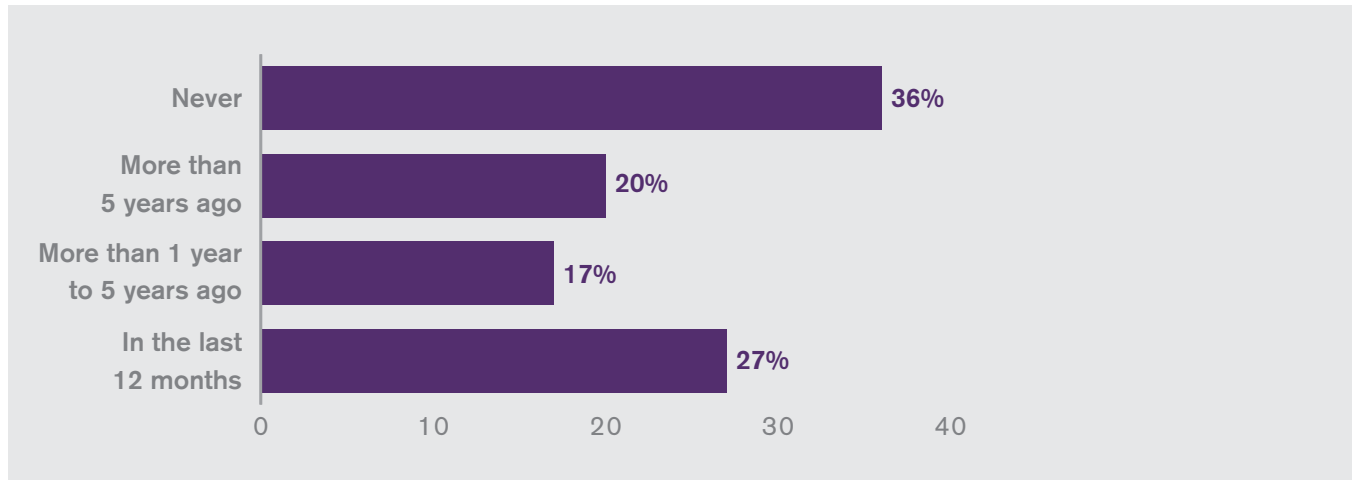
479

completions from mail

Significant Neck and Back Pain

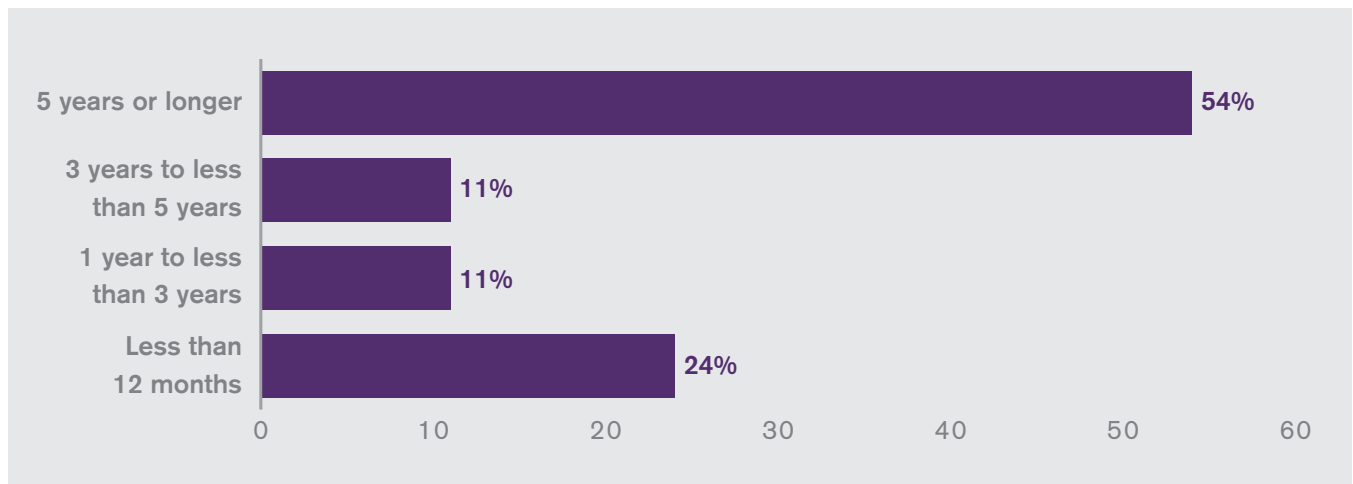
Neck or back pain is common among adults in the U.S. Nearly two-thirds of U.S. adults (63%) have had neck or back pain significant enough that they saw a healthcare professional for care at some point in their lifetime. About one in four adults (27%) saw a healthcare professional for significant neck or back pain in the last 12 months.

When was the last time that you had neck or back pain significant enough that you saw a healthcare professional for care? n=6,073



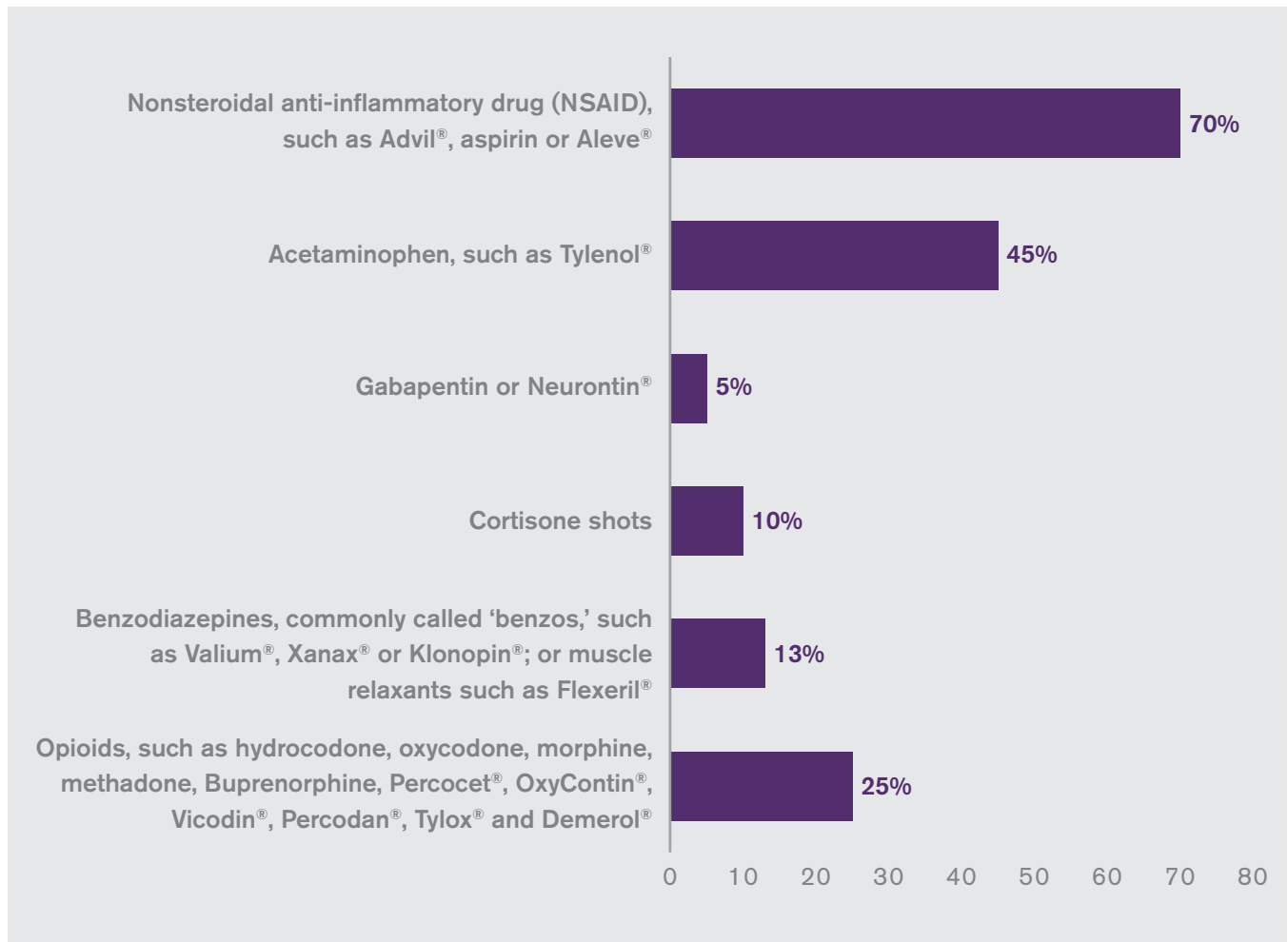
Many adults with neck or back pain have had continuing issues for at least five years. More than half of adults who saw a health professional for significant neck or back pain in the last 12 months (54%) have had an ongoing problem with neck or back pain for five years or more. Another 22% of adults who saw a health professional for significant neck or back pain in the last 12 months have had an ongoing problem with neck or back pain for one year up to five years, while 24% have had the pain for less than a year.

How long has neck or back pain been an ongoing problem for you? (Asked of those who saw a health professional for significant neck/back pain in the last 12 months) n=1,662



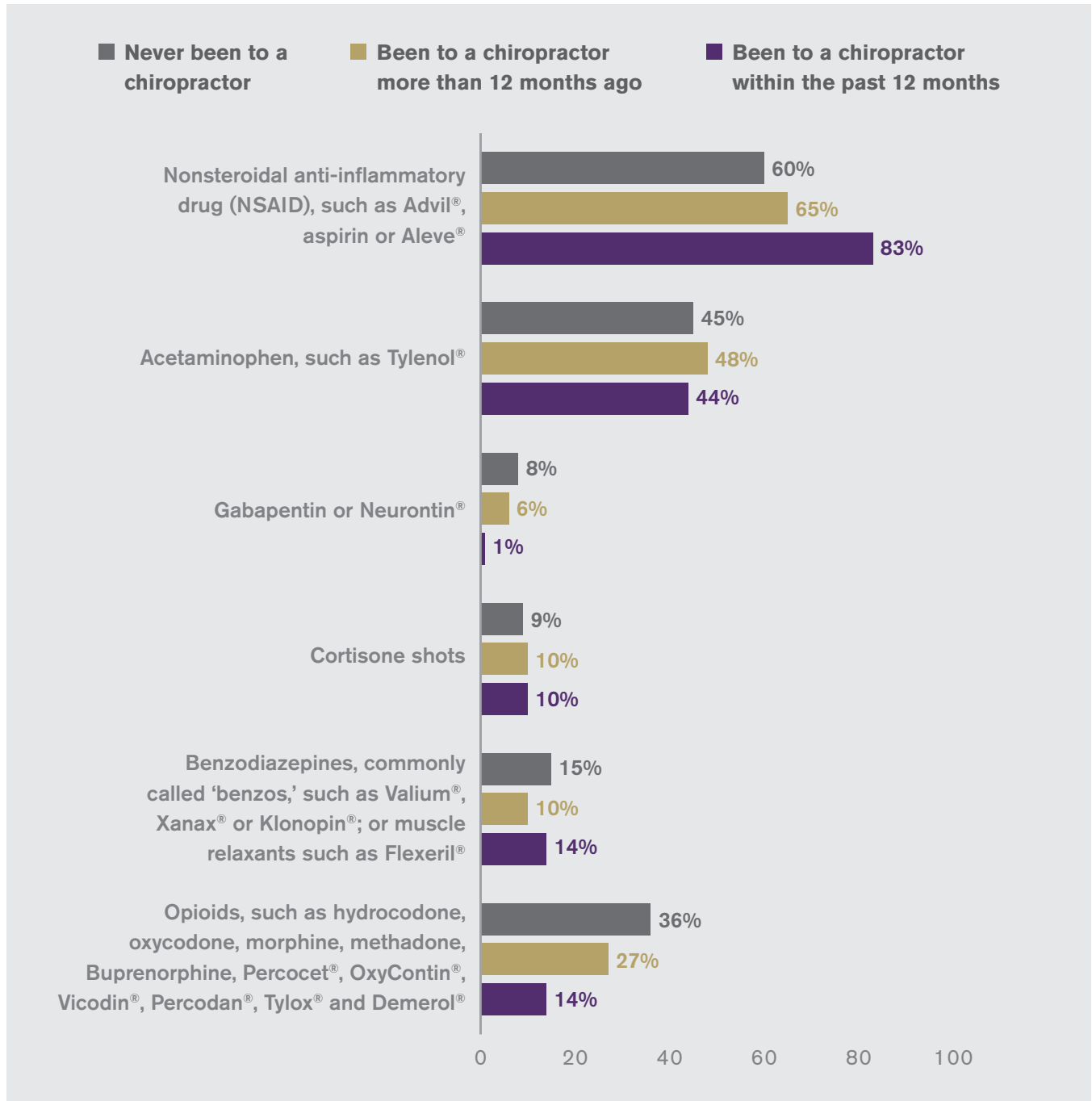
Among new neck or back pain sufferers — those who have had ongoing neck or back pain for less than 12 months — seven in 10 took a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID), such as Advil®, aspirin or Aleve® to manage the pain, and 45% have taken acetaminophen, such as Tylenol®, in the last 12 months. One in four new neck or back pain sufferers say they took an opioid for pain management.

Did you take any of the following for your neck or back pain in the last 12 months? (Asked of those who saw a health professional in the last 12 months for significant neck/back pain that had been ongoing for 12 months or less) n=364



New neck or back pain sufferers who have been to the chiropractor in the last 12 months are less likely than adults who did not see a chiropractor in the last 12 months to say they took opioids for pain and more likely to say they took NSAIDs.

Did you take any of the following for your neck or back pain in the last 12 months? (Asked of those who saw a health professional in the last 12 months for significant neck/back pain that had been ongoing for 12 months or less) n=362

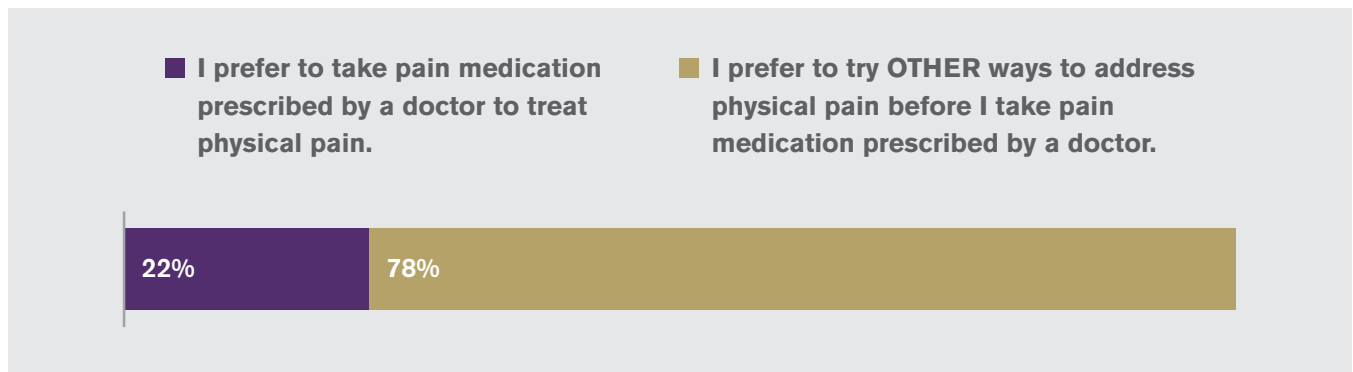


Prescription Pain Medication

Preferences for Prescription Pain Medication and Drug-Free Pain Management

Adults suffering from physical pain have a variety of options to address their pain — including taking prescription pain medication. But most adults in the United States say they prefer drug-free pain management. Given a choice, 78% of U.S. adults prefer to try other ways to address their physical pain before they take pain medication prescribed by a doctor, while 22% prefer to take pain medication prescribed by a doctor to treat their physical pain.

Which of the following best describes you? n=6,206



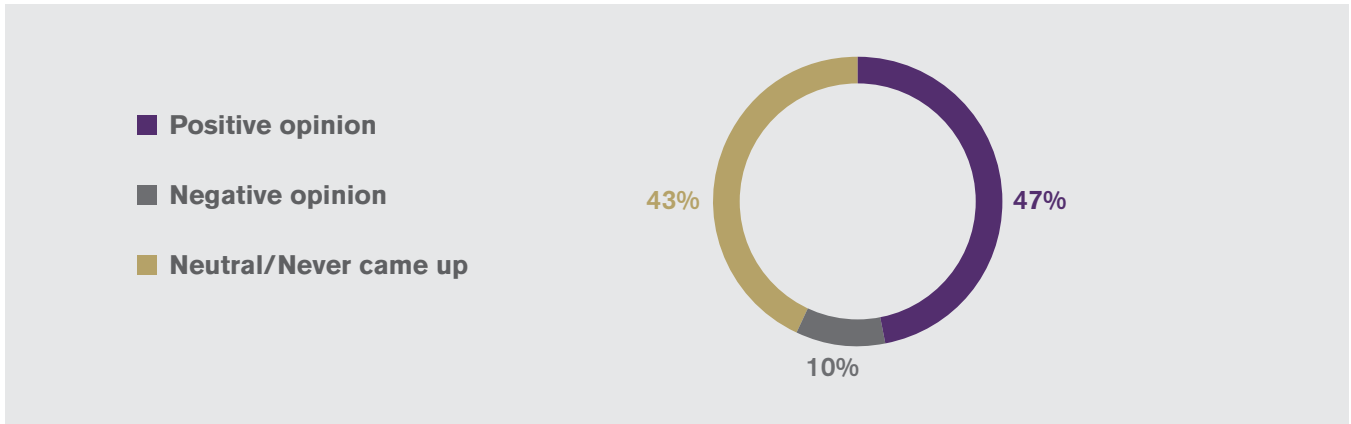
Adults with a high school diploma or less education (31%), adults with an annual household income under \$35,000 (32%), adults over 65 years old (33%), black adults (35%), and adults who have never been to a chiropractor (26%) are among the subgroups most likely to prefer prescription pain medication to treat physical pain; however, majorities in all of these groups still say they prefer to try other ways to treat physical pain.

Medical Doctors' and Chiropractors' Opinions on Prescription Pain Medications

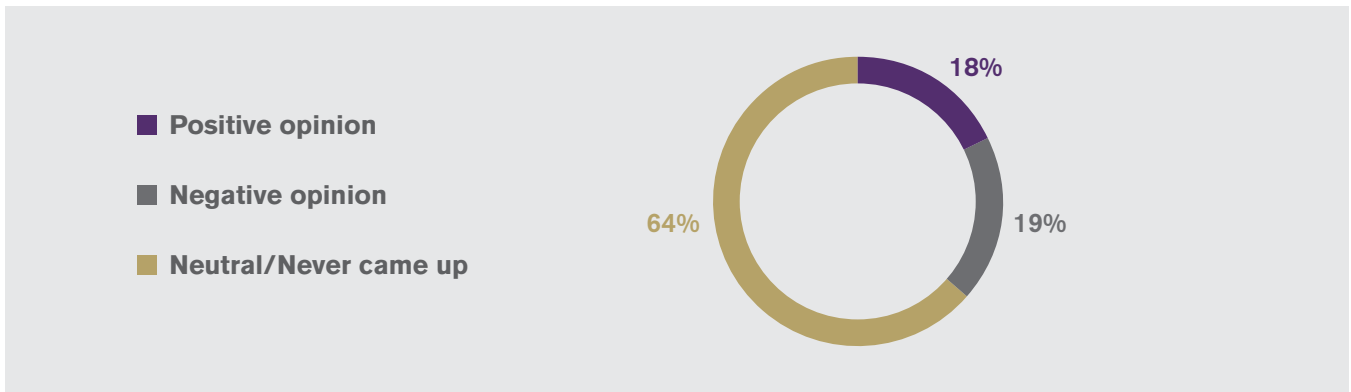
The risks and benefits of prescription pain medication are widely publicized. About half of adults with a medical doctor in the United States (47%) say their medical doctor has expressed a positive opinion about taking prescription pain medication, and 10% say their medical doctor has expressed a negative opinion about it. Forty-three percent of U.S. adults say their medical doctor has either expressed a neutral opinion or that the topic has never come up.

A minority of adults in the U.S. who have gone to a chiropractor in the last 12 months say their chiropractor has expressed a positive opinion about taking prescription pain medication. About one-fifth of adults in the United States (18%) say their chiropractor expressed a positive opinion, and 19% say their chiropractor has expressed a negative opinion. The topic never came up or the chiropractor expressed a neutral opinion for nearly two-thirds of chiropractic patients (64%).

Has your medical doctor ever expressed a positive or negative opinion to you about each of the following? Taking prescription pain medications (Asked of those who have a medical doctor) n=6,052



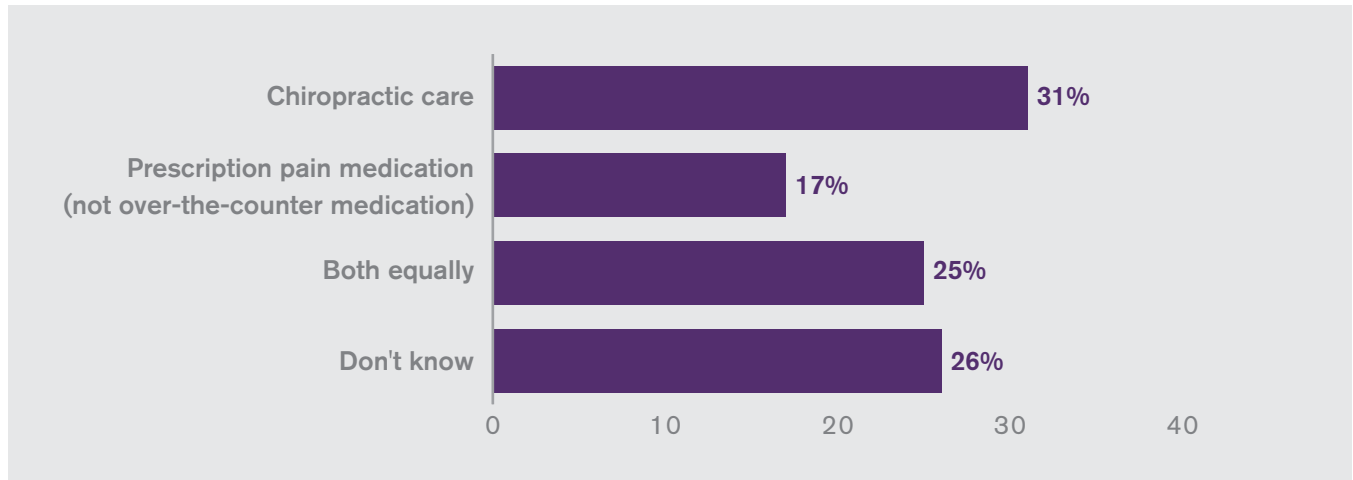
Has your chiropractor ever expressed a positive or negative opinion to you about each of the following? Taking prescription pain medications (Asked of those who saw a chiropractor in the past 12 months) n=1,096



The Safety of Prescription Pain Medication Compared With the Safety of Chiropractic Care

Chiropractic care is a drug-free option for people who have significant neck or back pain. Adults in the United States are more likely to say chiropractic care (31%) is safer than prescription pain medication (17%) for patients with significant neck or back pain. About half of adults either say they are equally safe (25%) or don't know which is safer (26%).

People who have significant neck or back pain have various methods they can use to try to address this pain. All treatment methods have some risk to a patient's health. In your opinion, which of the following is safer for patients who have significant neck/back pain? Chiropractic care or prescription pain medication n=6,208

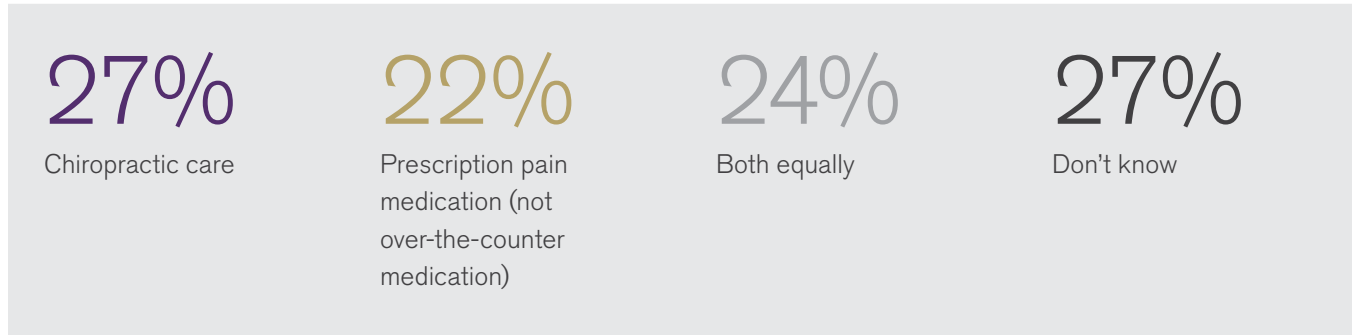


Adults with a high school diploma or less education (25%), adults over 65 years old (20%), and adults who have never been to a chiropractor (18%) are less likely than those in other subgroups to say chiropractic care is safer than prescription pain medication.

The Effectiveness of Prescription Pain Medication Compared With the Effectiveness of Chiropractic Care

Adults in the United States are slightly more likely to say that chiropractic care is more effective than prescription pain medication for patients who have significant neck or back pain. Nearly three in 10 adults in the United States (27%) say chiropractic care is more effective for patients, while about two in 10 adults (22%) say that prescription pain medication is safer for patients. About half either don't know (27%) or say they are equally effective (24%).

In your opinion, which of the following is more effective for patients who have significant neck or back pain? Chiropractic care or prescription pain medication n=6,148

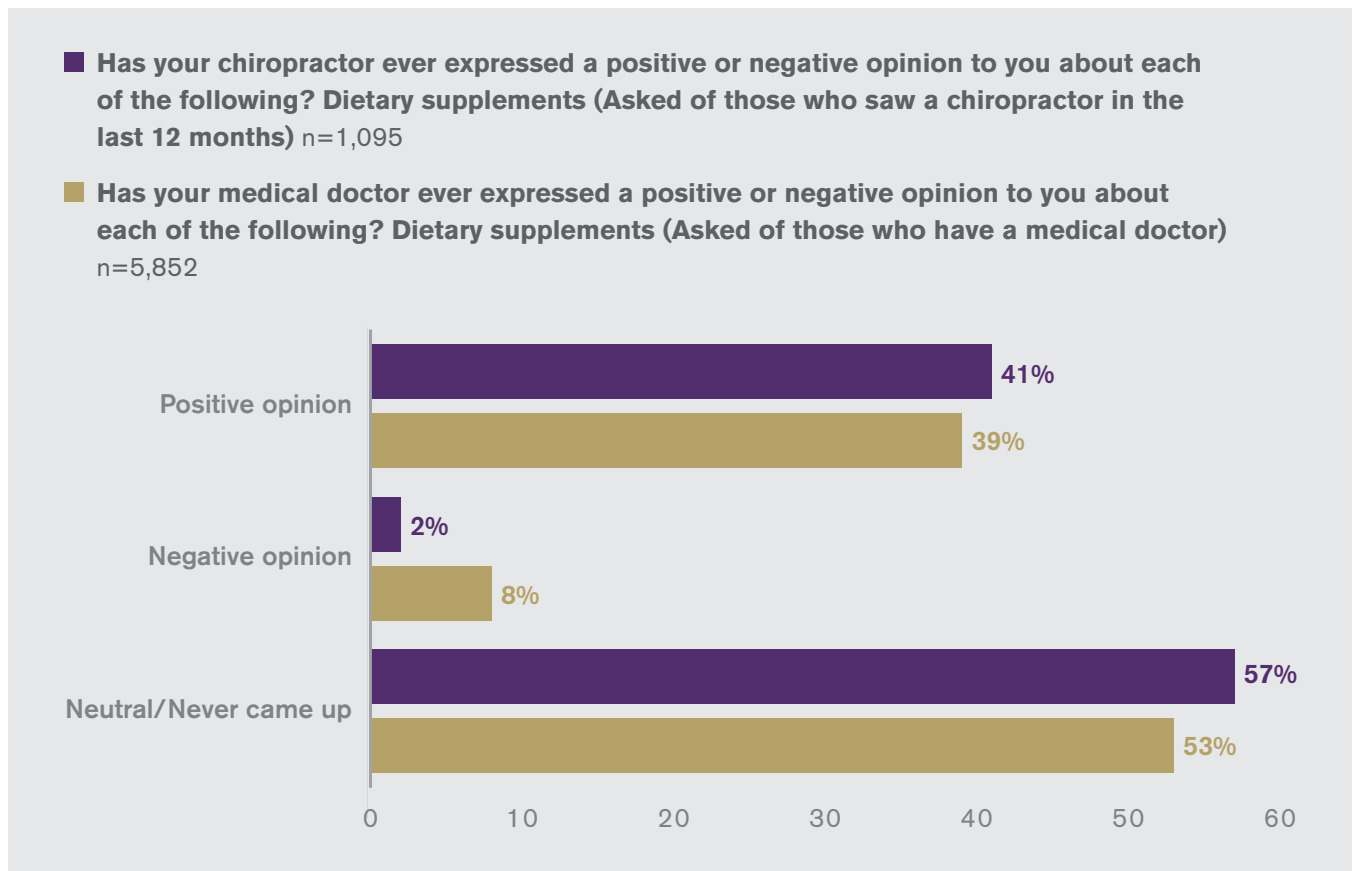


Medical Doctors' and Chiropractors' Opinions on Common Complementary Health Approaches

Respondents were asked whether their medical doctor and chiropractor (if applicable) have expressed positive or negative opinions about common complementary health approaches, including dietary supplements, meditation/yoga/tai chi, acupuncture and preventive cancer screening. Very few adults in the United States say their chiropractor or their medical doctor expressed a negative opinion about these health approaches.

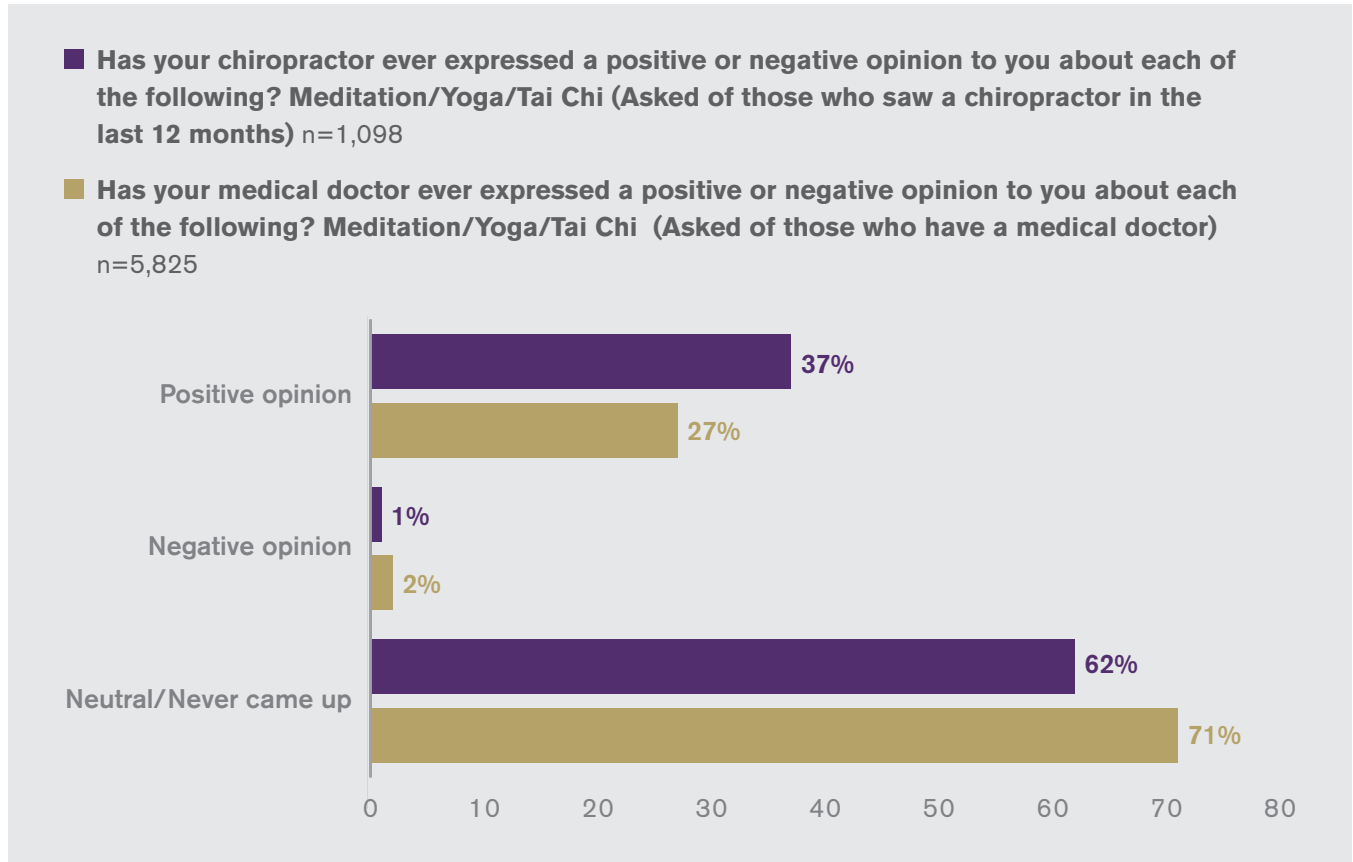
Dietary Supplements

According to patient reports, chiropractors and medical doctors are similarly likely to say positive things about dietary supplements. Four in 10 chiropractic patients (41%) say their chiropractor has expressed a positive opinion about dietary supplements, and nearly four in 10 U.S. adults with a medical doctor (39%) say their medical doctor has expressed a positive opinion about dietary supplements.



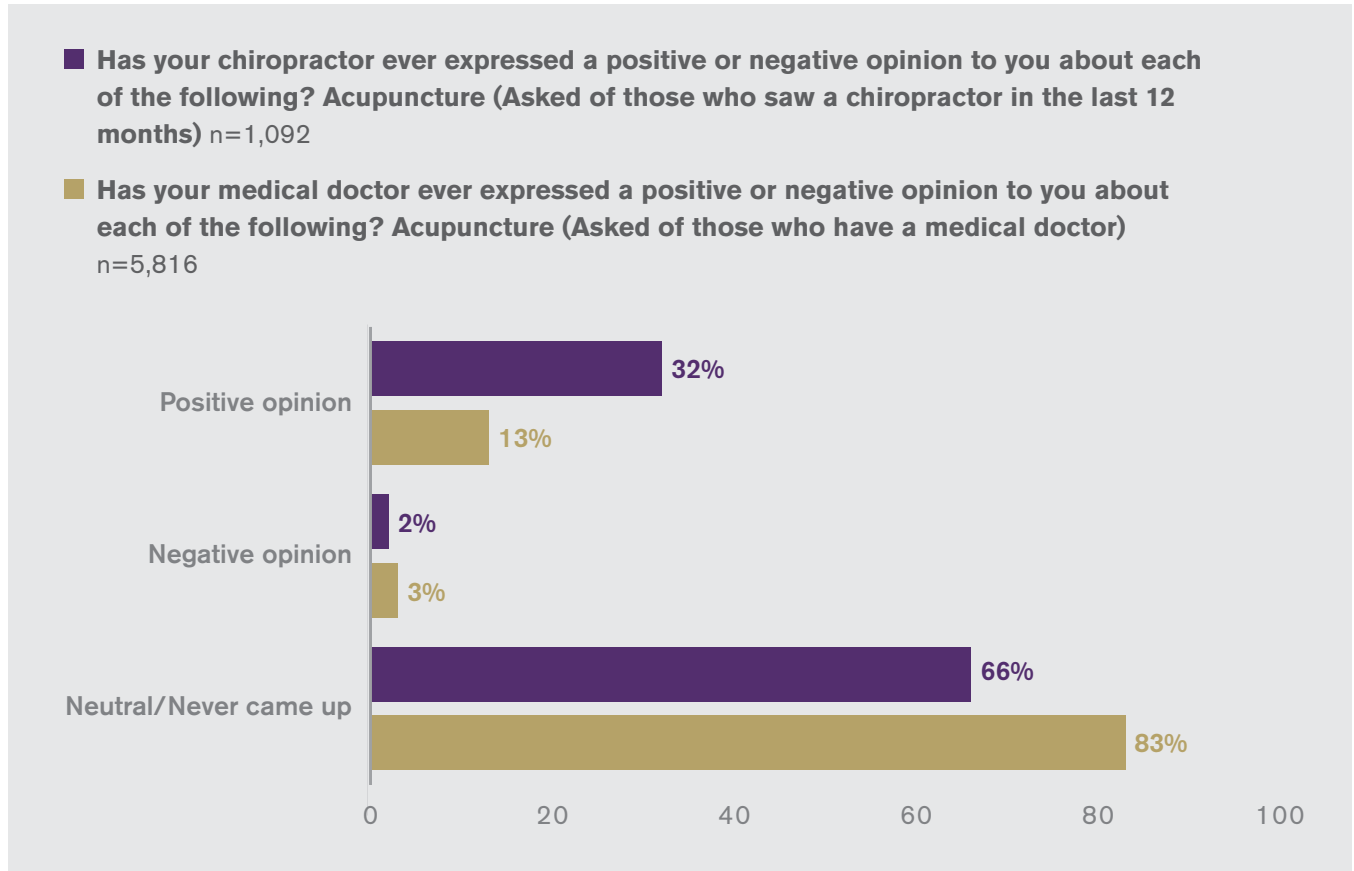
Meditation/Yoga/Tai Chi

Nearly four in 10 chiropractic patients in the United States (37%) say their chiropractor has expressed a positive opinion about meditation, yoga or tai chi, while nearly three in 10 adults in the United States (27%) say their medical doctor has done so.



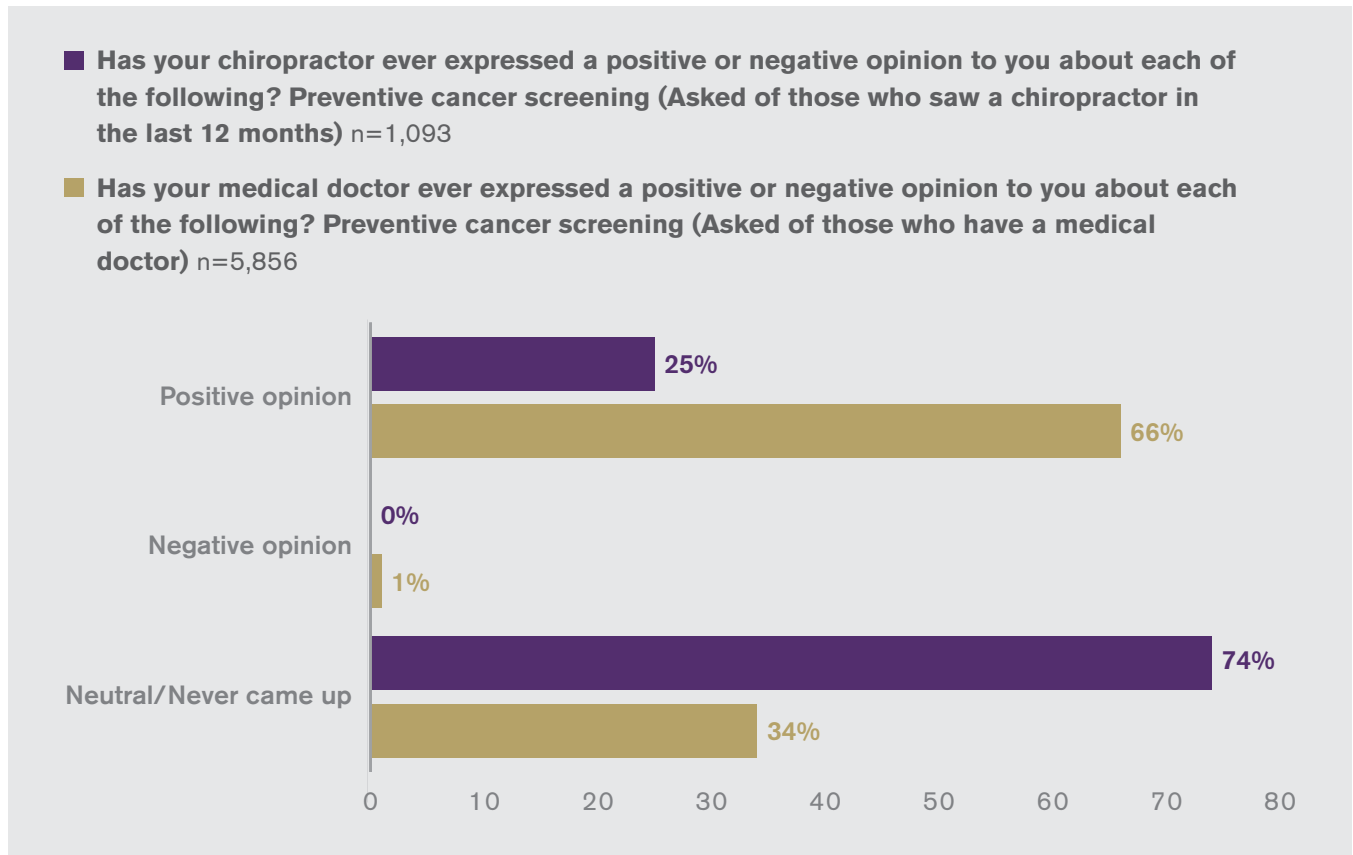
Acupuncture

Three in 10 chiropractic patients (32%) say their chiropractor has expressed a positive opinion about acupuncture. This percentage is more than twice the proportion of adults with a medical doctor who say their M.D. has expressed a positive opinion about acupuncture (13%).



Preventative Cancer Screening

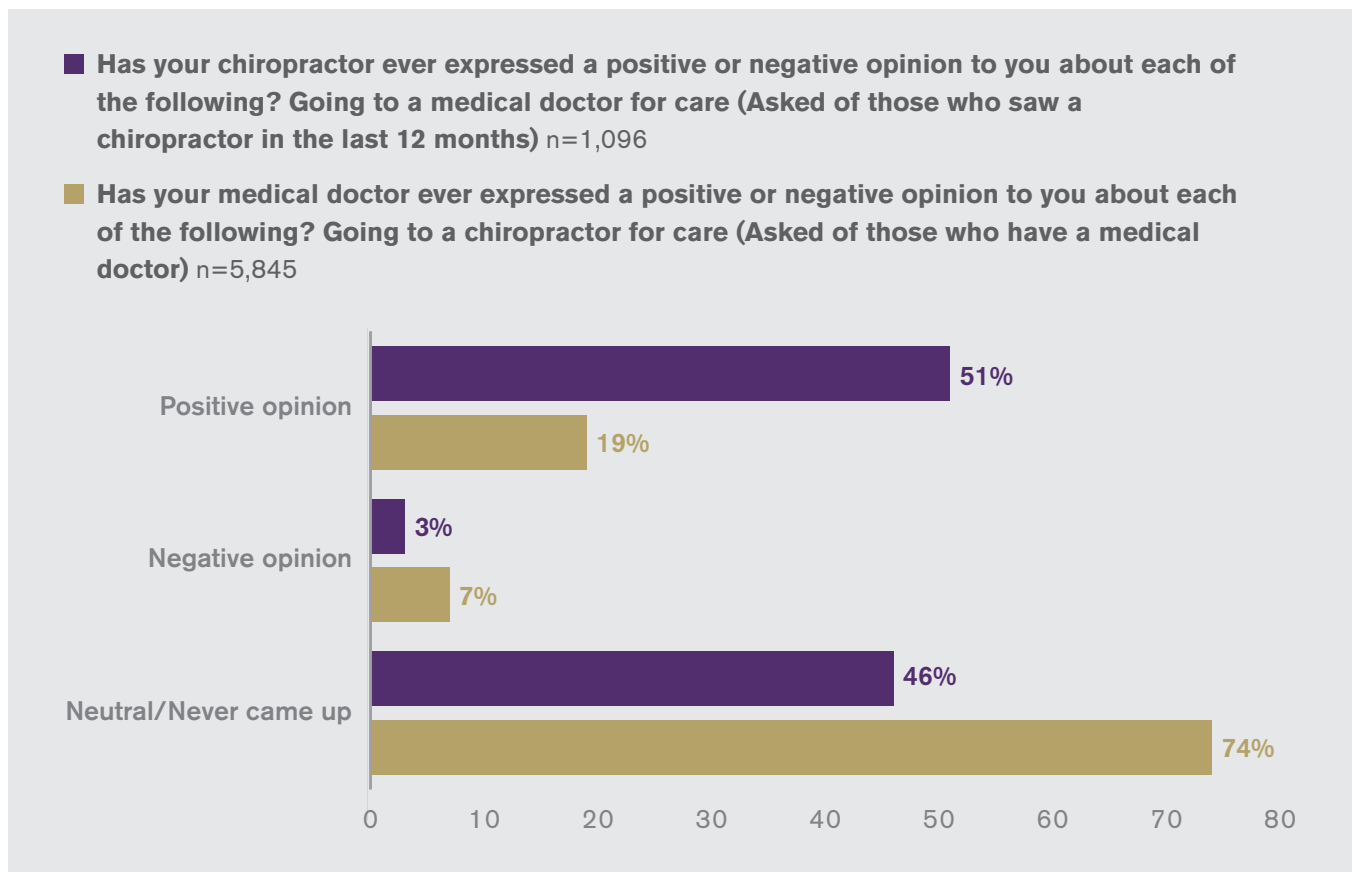
Medical doctors are much more likely than chiropractors to express positive opinions about preventative cancer screening, according to patient reports, although this largely is because cancer screening comes up infrequently in chiropractic care. Two-thirds of adults in the United States (66%) say their medical doctor has expressed a positive opinion about preventative cancer screening. One-fourth of chiropractic patients (25%) say their chiropractor has expressed a positive opinion, although the vast majority say this topic never came up with their chiropractor.



Medical Doctors' and Chiropractors' Opinions of Each Other

A little more than half of adults in the United States who went to a chiropractor in the last 12 months (51%) say their chiropractor has expressed a positive opinion about going to a medical doctor for care. About one in five adults with a medical doctor (19%) say their M.D. has expressed a positive opinion about going to a chiropractor for care.

Very few chiropractic patients (3%) say their chiropractor expressed a negative opinion about going to a medical doctor for care. Likewise, few U.S. adults (7%) say their medical doctor expressed a negative opinion about going to a chiropractor for care. Nearly three in four U.S. adults (74%) say chiropractic care has never come up with their medical doctor or that a neutral opinion was expressed. Likewise, for nearly half of chiropractic users (46%), going to a medical doctor for care was not discussed with their chiropractor or a neutral opinion was expressed.



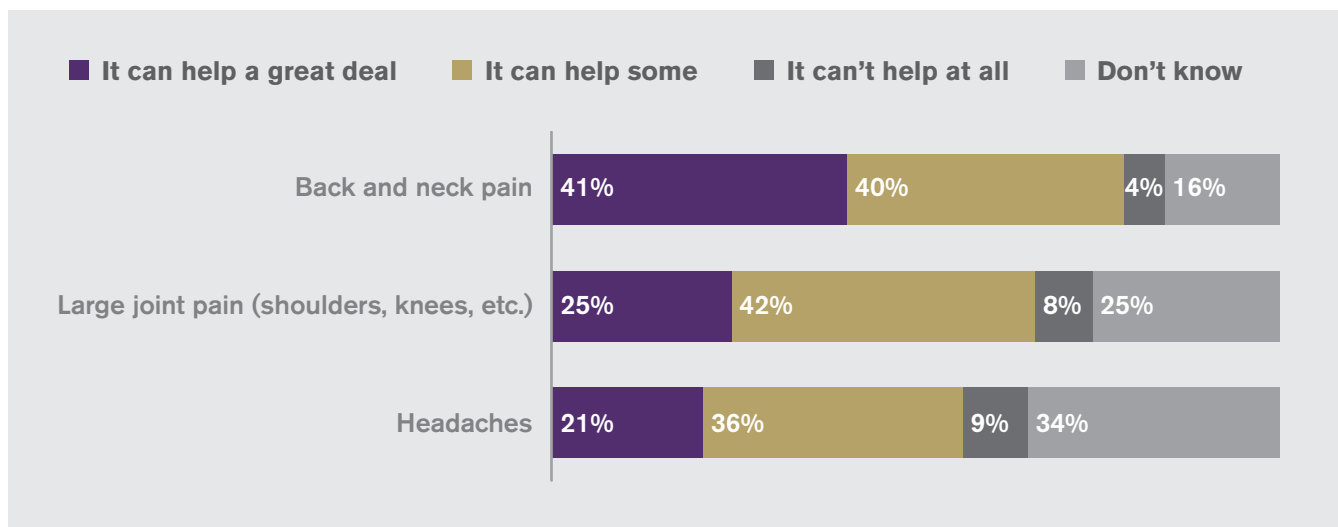
Perceptions of Chiropractic Care

Perceptions on the Helpfulness of Chiropractic Care

Most adults in the United States think chiropractic care can help “a great deal” or “some” with back and neck pain, large joint pain, and headaches. Eight out of 10 adults think chiropractic care can help a great deal (41%) or some (40%) with back and neck pain. Nearly seven out of 10 adults think chiropractic care can help a great deal (25%) or some (42%) with large joint pain, and nearly six out of 10 think chiropractic care can help a great deal (21%) or some (36%) with headaches. Very few adults in the United States think chiropractic care can't help at all with back and neck pain, large joint pain, or headaches.

Do you think chiropractic care can help a great deal, some or not at all with each of the following?

n=6,105-6,109

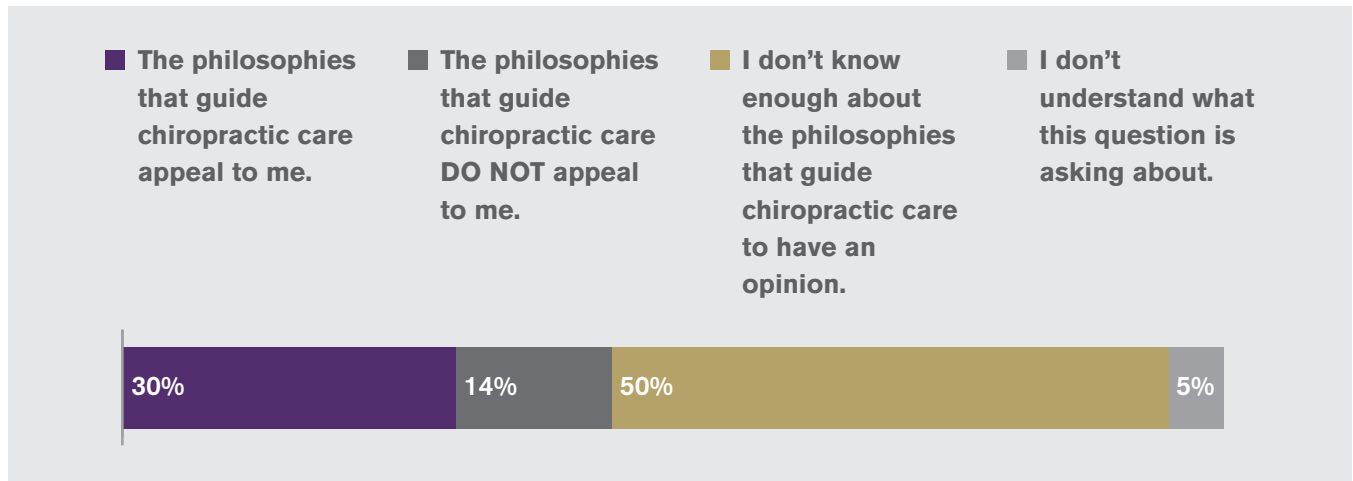


Perceptions on the Philosophies That Guide Chiropractic Care

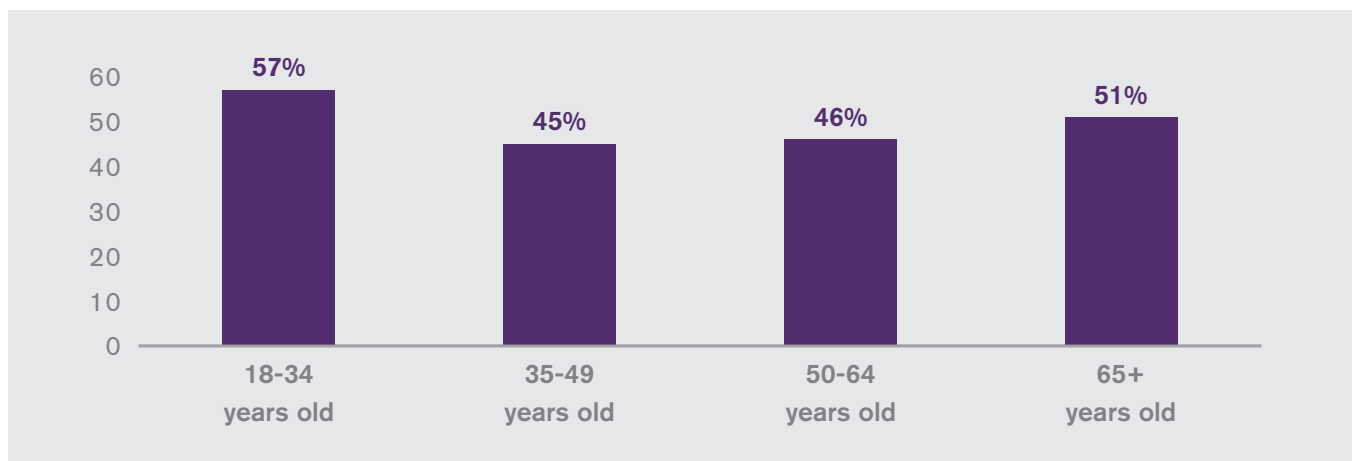
Half of Americans say they do not know enough about the philosophies that guide chiropractic care to have an opinion. Adults under 35 years old (57%) and black adults (65%) are the most likely to say they do not know enough about the philosophies that guide chiropractic care.

Adults in the United States who knew enough about the philosophies that guide chiropractic care to have an opinion were two times more likely to say the philosophies that guide chiropractic care appeal to them. Three in 10 adults in the United States (30%) say this, and 14% say the philosophies that guide chiropractic care do not appeal to them.

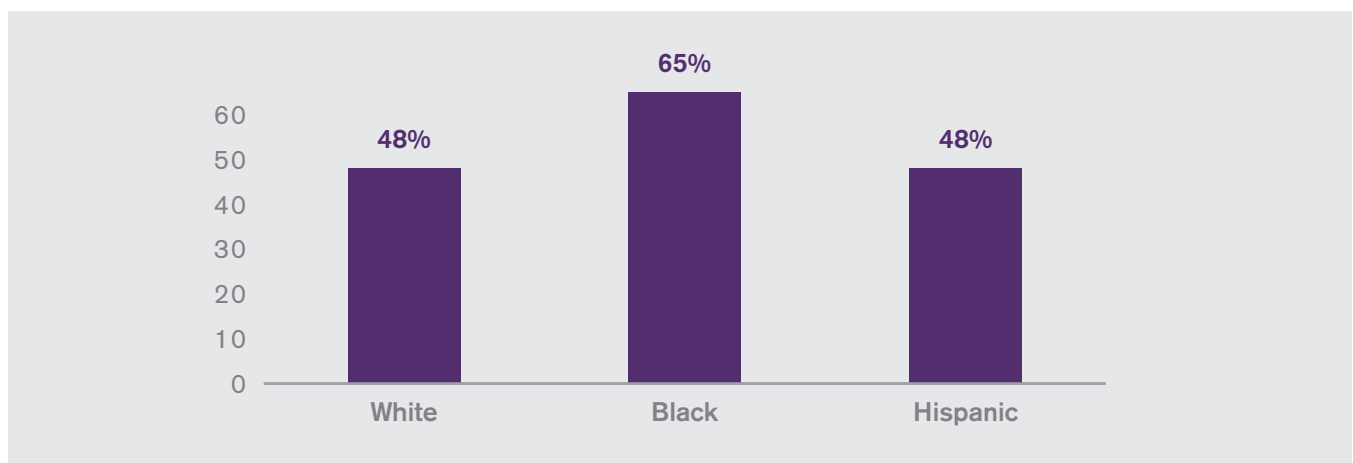
Please think about what you know about the philosophies that guide chiropractic care. Which of the following BEST describes you? n=6,162



I don't know enough about the philosophies that guide chiropractic care to have an opinion. n=2,817



I don't know enough about the philosophies that guide chiropractic care to have an opinion. n=2,737

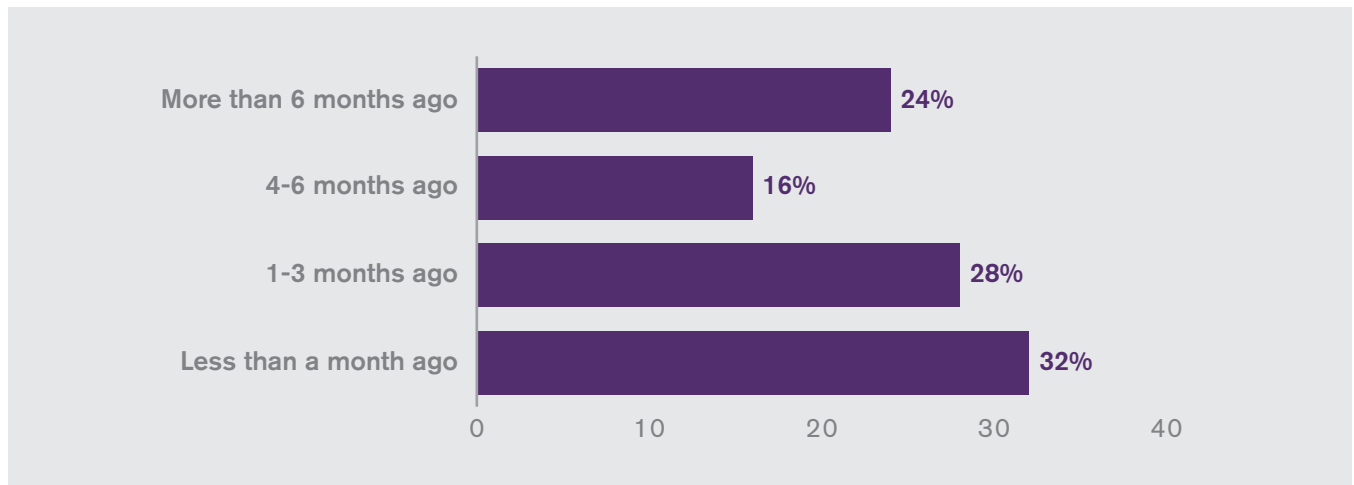


Chiropractic Use

Chiropractic Use in the Last 12 Months

In the U.S., 18% of adults say they saw a chiropractor for care in the last 12 months. Three-fourths of this group (76%) saw a chiropractor in the six months prior to the study.

When was the last time you saw a chiropractor for care? (Asked of those who saw a chiropractor in the last 12 months) n=1,107

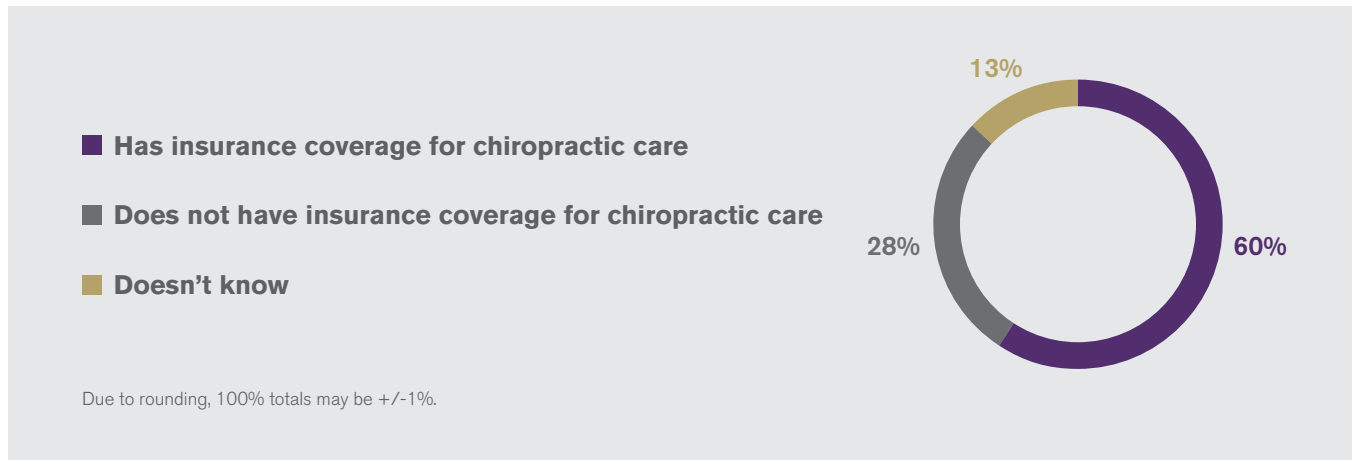


Past-year chiropractor users saw their chiropractor an average of 11 times in the last 12 months. This is consistent with the findings from the **2015 Gallup-Palmer College of Chiropractic Annual Report: Americans' Perceptions of Chiropractic**.

Cost of Chiropractic Care

Six out of 10 past-year chiropractic users (60%) say they have insurance coverage for chiropractic care, while 28% do not. The remaining 13% of U.S. adults who saw a chiropractor for care in the last 12 months don't know whether they have insurance coverage for chiropractic care.

Do you currently have any insurance coverage for chiropractic care? (Asked of those who saw a chiropractor in the last 12 months) n=1,104



How Chiropractic Patients Paid for Chiropractic Care

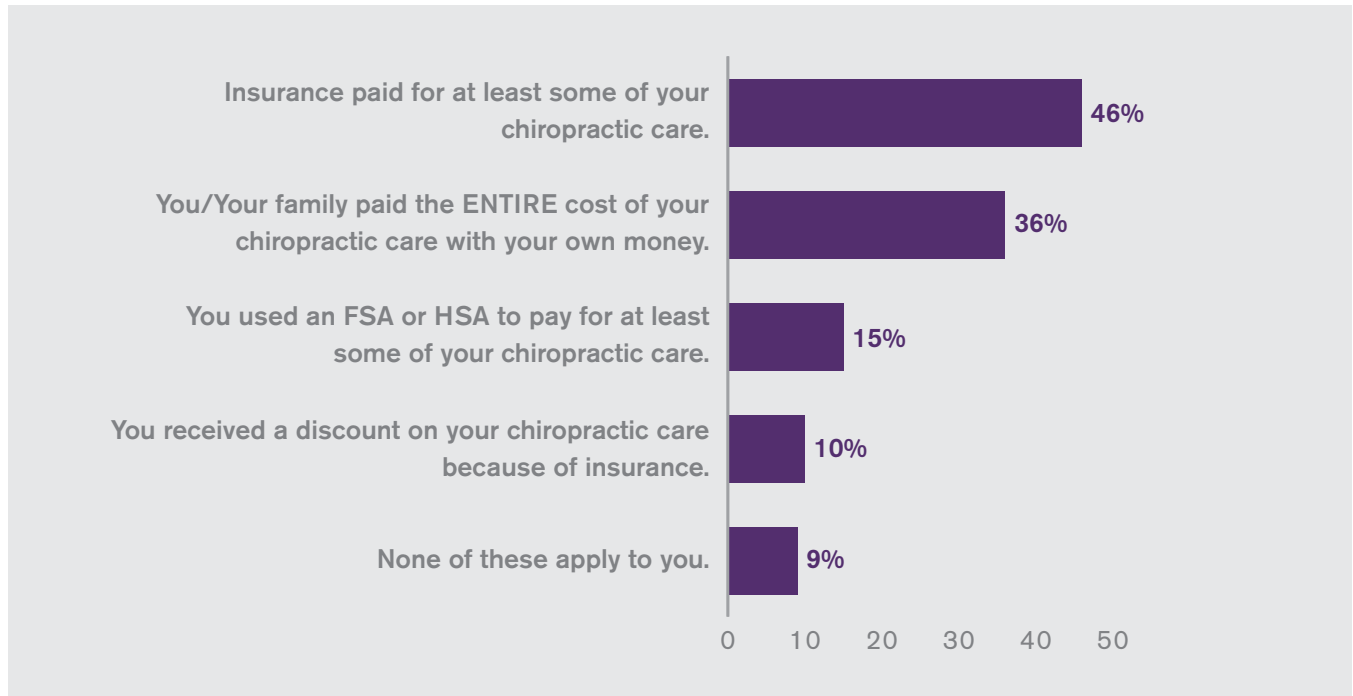
Less than half of past-year chiropractic users (46%) say insurance paid for at least some of their chiropractic care during the last 12 months. More than one-third of past-year chiropractic users (36%) say they or their family paid for the entire cost of their chiropractic care with their own money, and 15% say they used a Flexible Spending Account (FSA) or Health Savings Account (HSA) to pay for at least some of their chiropractic care.

The main reasons given by chiropractic patients who had to pay out-of-pocket expenses for chiropractic care are that their chiropractor is out-of-network (28%) or their deductible or copay has not been met yet (26%).

A photograph of a chiropractor in a white coat examining a patient's neck. The patient is lying on a table, and the chiropractor is leaning over them, focusing on the neck area. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent purple filter.

Adults in the United States who saw a chiropractor for care in the last 12 months paid a median of **\$35** for out-of-pocket costs at a typical appointment with their chiropractor.

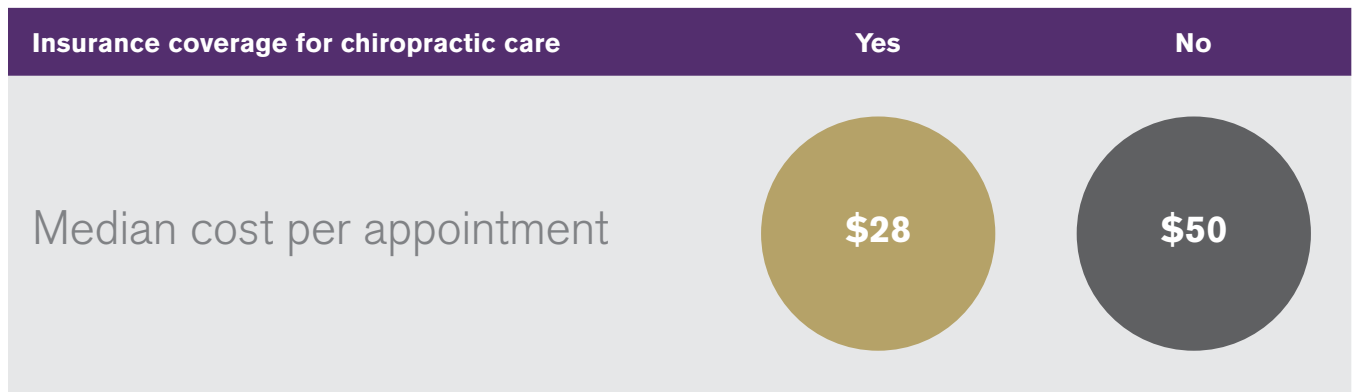
Please think about how you PAID for your chiropractic care during the last 12 months. Check all the options that apply to you. (Asked of those who saw a chiropractor in the last 12 months) n=1,106



Typical Out-of-Pocket Costs for Chiropractic Care

Past-year chiropractic users without insurance coverage for chiropractic care pay almost two times more than past-year users in the United States with insurance coverage. Those without coverage pay a median of \$50 in out-of-pocket costs at a typical appointment with their chiropractor. Past-year users with coverage pay a median of \$28 in out-of-pocket costs for a typical appointment with their chiropractor.

How much do you have to pay out-of-pocket for a typical appointment with your chiropractor? Do you currently have any insurance coverage for chiropractic care? (Asked of those who saw a chiropractor in the last 12 months) n=821

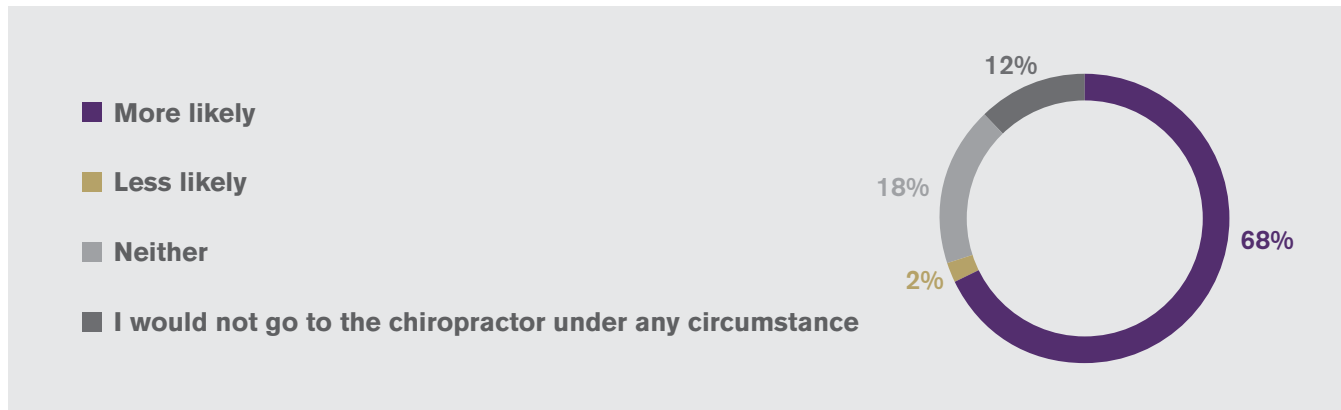


Increasing Use of Chiropractic Care

Adults who don't use chiropractic care were asked whether collaborative care, understanding what chiropractors do and chiropractors prescribing medications would make them more or less likely to go to a chiropractor.

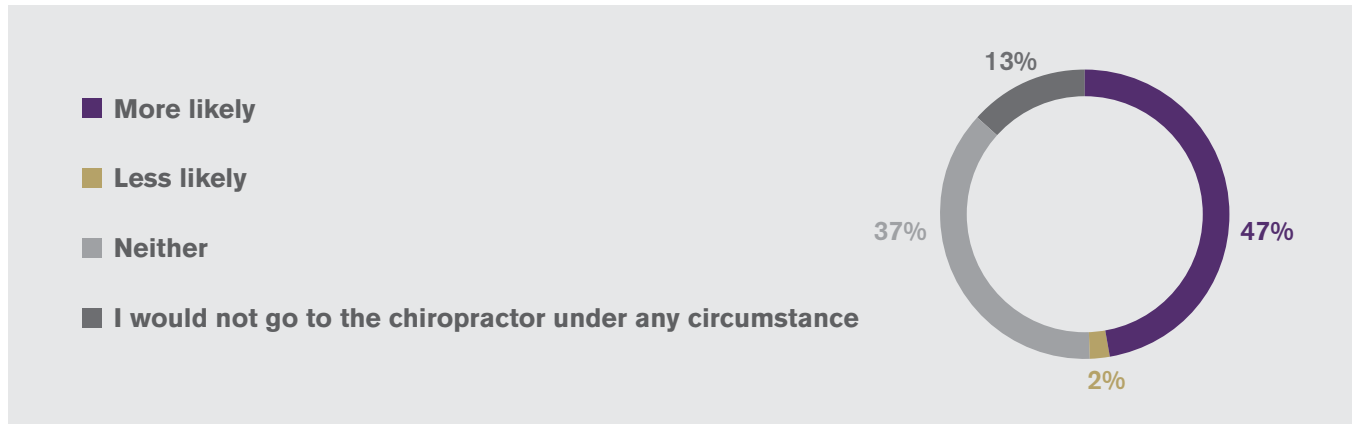
More than two-thirds of adults who have never seen a chiropractor or went more than 12 months ago (68%) say they would be more likely to go to a chiropractor for care if they knew the chiropractor would work closely with their other doctors to collaborate on their care. In the **2016 Gallup-Palmer College of Chiropractic Annual Report: Americans' Perceptions of Chiropractic**, seven out of 10 past-year chiropractic users (71%) said they wanted their chiropractor to work closely with their other doctors to collaborate on their care. These two findings demonstrate that both nonusers and current users alike want collaborative care among chiropractors and their other doctors.

Would you be more likely or less likely to go to a chiropractor for care under each of the following circumstances? If you knew your chiropractor would work closely with your other doctors to collaborate on your care (Asked of those who never saw a chiropractor or went more than 12 months ago) n=4,934



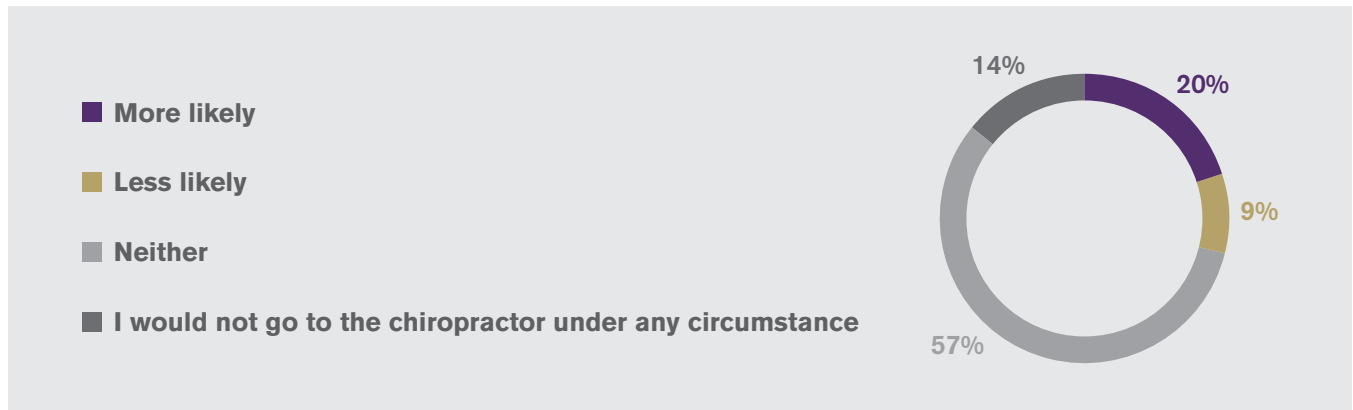
Nearly half of nonchiropractic users (47%) say they would be more likely to go to a chiropractor for care if they knew more about what chiropractors do. Black adults (61%) and young adults from age 18 to age 34 (62%) are more likely to say they would visit a chiropractor if they knew more about what chiropractors do. These findings demonstrate an opportunity for the chiropractic profession to expand its educational outreach efforts to young adults and minority communities.

Would you be more likely or less likely to go to a chiropractor for care under each of the following circumstances? If you knew more about what chiropractors do (Asked of those who never saw a chiropractor or went more than 12 months ago) n=4,870



Two out of 10 nonusers (20%) say they would be more likely to go to a chiropractor for care if chiropractors could prescribe medications. Low-income adults (26%) are a little more likely than other demographic groups to say they would be more likely to go to a chiropractor for care if chiropractors could prescribe medications.

Would you be more likely or less likely to go to a chiropractor for care under each of the following circumstances? If chiropractors could prescribe medications (Asked of those who never saw a chiropractor or went more than 12 months ago) n=4,858



Reasons More People Don't See a Chiropractor

All respondents were also asked why they think more people don't see a chiropractor. Nearly four in 10 adults in the United States (37%) say more people don't see a chiropractor because they lack trust in chiropractors. Three in 10 adults in the United States (30%) say more people don't see a chiropractor because they lack information about the chiropractic profession.

In your opinion, why don't more people see a chiropractor? (Open-ended) n=4,932

Don't believe in/trust them/Doesn't work/Might cause damage/Not real doctors	37%
Lack of facts/information/Don't know enough about them	30%
Cost	15%
Insurance does not cover	10%
Fear/People are afraid	8%
Time involved/Continuous visits/treatments	7%
Medical doctors don't like them/don't recommend	6%
Bad image/publicity	6%
Dislike physical manipulation/pain/cracking bones	6%
Would rather take medication	4%
No need/desire to go to them	4%
Limited scope of practice/knowledge	3%

Reasons Former Chiropractic Patients Haven't Seen a Chiropractor in the Last 12 Months

More than three in 10 adults in the United States whose last time visiting a chiropractor was more than 12 months ago (35%) say the main reason they haven't seen a chiropractor in the past 12 months is that the chiropractic care they received was effective and they no longer need it. Less than one-fourth say the main reason they haven't been back is that chiropractic care was not effective for addressing their health issues (20%), chiropractic care requires too many visits (18%), they do not have adequate insurance coverage for chiropractic care (17%), chiropractic care is too expensive (17%) or some other reason (17%).

What is the MAIN reason you haven't seen a chiropractor in the past 12 months? (Select up to THREE responses) (Asked of those who saw chiropractor more than 12 months ago) n=2,472

The chiropractic care I received was effective and I no longer need it.	35%
Chiropractic care was NOT effective for addressing my health issues.	20%
Chiropractic care requires too many visits.	18%
I do not have adequate insurance coverage for chiropractic care.	17%
Chiropractic care is too expensive.	17%
Some other reason.	17%
I have another healthcare provider I go to.	10%
I don't trust chiropractors.	7%
There is too much variation between chiropractors.	7%
I don't think chiropractic care is safe.	7%
I don't know how to find a good chiropractor.	4%
I don't know what to expect when I see a chiropractor.	2%

Conclusion

There is a high prevalence of neck and back pain among adults in the United States, and most say they would prefer to try ways to treat the pain before resorting to prescription medication.

The chiropractic profession has an opportunity to position itself as a drug-free option for pain management for many Americans who have never tried chiropractic care. Eight out of 10 adults in the United States (81%) think chiropractic care can help a great deal (41%) or help some (40%) with back and neck pain. Adults in the United States are more likely to say chiropractic care is safer and more effective than prescription pain medication for patients with significant neck or back pain.

However, many Americans are largely unfamiliar with chiropractic care, which is likely a barrier for many considering chiropractic care. Half of adults in the U.S. (50%) do not know the philosophies that guide chiropractic care, and nearly half of adults who have not seen a chiropractor for care in the last 12 months (47%) say they would be more likely to go to a chiropractor for care if they knew more about what chiropractors do. Blacks (61%) and young adults (62%) are more likely than their counterparts to say they would visit a chiropractor if they knew more about what chiropractors do. Adults in the U.S. believe the main reason more people don't go to a chiropractor is that they lack trust in chiropractors.

Chiropractic patients and nonpatients alike favor collaboration between chiropractors and other doctors. Two-thirds of adults in the U.S. who have not seen a chiropractor for care in the last 12 months (68%) say they would be more likely to go to a chiropractor for care if they knew their chiropractor would work closely with their other doctors. The 2016 *Gallup-Palmer College of Chiropractic Annual Report: Americans' Perceptions of Chiropractic* found that more than two-thirds of adults in the U.S. who have seen a chiropractor for care in the last 12 months (71%) want their chiropractor to work closely with their other doctors to collaborate on their healthcare. Increasing collaboration between chiropractors and other doctors may increase utilization of chiropractic care, particularly among black adults and those under 35.

The cost of chiropractic care is largely driven by whether patients have insurance coverage for the care they receive. Chiropractic patients without insurance for chiropractic care pay nearly twice as much for a typical chiropractic appointment as do those with insurance for chiropractic care. In addition, 60% of chiropractic patients have insurance coverage for chiropractic care, but only 46% of chiropractic patients say insurance paid for at least some their chiropractic services. The main reasons given by chiropractic patients who had to pay out-of-pocket expenses for their chiropractic care are that their chiropractor is out-of-network or their deductible or copay has not been met yet.

Methods

The results are based on a nationally representative Gallup Panel web and mail study completed by 6,305 national adults aged 18 or older, with 5,826 completions from the web and 479 from mail. This study was conducted from Feb. 8-March 13, 2017. The Gallup Panel is a probability-based longitudinal panel of more than 100,000 United States adults whom Gallup selects using random-digit-dial phone interviews that cover landline and cellular telephone numbers. Gallup also uses address-based sampling methods to recruit Gallup Panel members.

The Gallup Panel is not an opt-in panel, and members do not receive incentives for participating. The sample for this study was weighted to be demographically representative of the United States adult population, using 2015 Current Population Survey figures. For results based on this sample, one can say that the maximum margin of sampling error is ± 2 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. Margins of error are higher for subsamples. In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error and bias into the findings of public opinion polls. The study was commissioned by Palmer College of Chiropractic.

About Palmer College of Chiropractic

Palmer College of Chiropractic is the founding college of the chiropractic profession, and is known as *The Trusted Leader in Chiropractic Education*®. It was founded in 1897, in Davenport, Iowa, by D.D. Palmer, the discoverer of chiropractic. More than 2,200 students attend Palmer College campuses in Davenport, Iowa; Port Orange, Fla.; and San Jose, Calif. Palmer's nearly 30,000 practicing alumni comprise almost half of the doctors of chiropractic in the United States.

About Gallup

Gallup delivers analytics and advice to help leaders and organizations solve their most pressing problems. Combining more than 80 years of experience with its global reach, Gallup knows more about the attitudes and behaviors of employees, customers, students and citizens than any other organization in the world.



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