

Comparing the Effects of Chiropractic and Medical Treatment for Older Adults

In this study, authors studied survey data of 1,057 Medicare beneficiaries, who were at least 70 years of age, to compare the effectiveness of treatment for uncomplicated back conditions. The two treatment categories were chiropractic or medical care. Services provided to patients, Activities of Daily Living, Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (activities allowing for independent living within a community but not necessary for fundamental function), and Lower Body Function were studied over a 2 year period. The authors found:

- > Chiropractic visits were greater in number and longer in duration than those of medical providers
- > Chiropractic care was protective against declines in self-rated health
- > Chiropractic care was protective against declines in Lower Body Functioning

TAKE-HOME MESSAGE

This research suggests: "...when chiropractic care is delivered in practice at care levels comparable to those used in clinical trials... it confers significant and substantial benefits to older adult functional ability and self-rated health" for as much as 2 years.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

This study provides evidence that chiropractic care is beneficial for older adults in the important areas of self-rated health and daily living function. Further defining key therapeutic levels, or dose, will help us understand better the best amount of care that confers the most protective benefit from functional decline and self-rated health that accompanies chiropractic care for these individuals.

For more information, the complete article is online at:

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0161475414000323#>

REFERENCE

Weigel PA, Hockenberry J, Bentler SE, Wilinsky FD. **The comparative effect of episodes of chiropractic and medical treatment on the health of older adults.** J Manipulative Physiol Ther 2014;37(3):143-54.

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