

The Power of POSTURE

By Steven Weiniger, DC



Posture is already a concern for many, one that will grow as computer-bound boomers age and their slumping posture degenerates into hunching older bodies. Nearly all DCs—with specialties from spine care to sports performance, pain relief to wellness—agree on the importance of posture.

Posture is currently a focus for many chiropractic techniques and specialties, and it aligns with the public perception of the profession. Repositioning the pain patient toward an awareness of his or her postural and motion deficits provides a logical and intuitively true biomechanical link between perceived pain and observable motion dysfunction. Restoring lost segmental motion is an agreed-upon benefit of an adjustment, and it usually correlates with pain relief.

In addition, the posture-focused DC works to strengthen posture, empowering patients for pain management, rehab and wellness by aligning with the cultural and scientific perceived value of strengthening core stabilizing muscles. Adding posture, balance and alignment exercises to chiropractic not only trains healthy joints to move in full-range symmetry but also strengthens overall posture, which can have positive effects on psychological and/or emotional issues by improving posture and body consciousness.

Economics and Consumer Desire

Like it or not (and regardless of national health care programs), the demographic and economic reality will be one where ballooning numbers of seniors with neuromusculoskeletal (NMS) aches and pains increasingly are forced to pay for more NMS care from their own pockets. Non-acute chiropractic care more often will end up in that out-of-pocket box and be classified as “non-critical and discretionary.” Simultaneously, posture and postural

back pain as consumer concerns will grow as boomers stiffen.

The Opportunity

The niche of “posture expert” will grow from the confluence of these factors, and it will put building a brand identity within reach of the chiropractic profession. The silver lining of being a non-covered service is that the patient is the consumer, able to choose based upon desire and perceived value rather than third-party dictates. And building strong patient relationships in an affordable economic model long has been a chiropractic strength.

The trend is toward a society of empowered patients, so educating patients to understand posture and body mechanics encourages them to value posture-based services and potentially to desire them despite a lack of insurance reimbursement. A posture based chiropractic practice teaches patients that moving well is key to aging well. Along with relieving pain, the posture practice restores motion and alignment, while teaching patients an indi-

vidualized daily posture exercise program grounded in sound biomechanics. People become more aware of their posture with exercises that kinesthetically “feel” right when they are moving well, and of their adaptive motions when they are not. Ad-

ditionally, when they are adjusted, they not only feel better, but they can see a functional difference on restoring strong joint motion. This builds “posture consciousness,” which along with procedures such as initial and follow-up posture pictures, builds the perceived value of strong posture.

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The chiropractic profession can earn cultural relevance, and then authority, by promoting the desirability of healthy posture. Aligning with the “move-well-to-age-well” cultural meme can create a potential societal tipping point toward the idea that intelligent people choose to get adjusted to stay active and optimize wellness. Whether our possibilities for contributing to wellness are realized—or the profession becomes increasingly marginalized—will be decided during our watch. ■

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