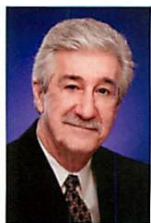


Doctor **TO** Doctor



Logan College and the Logan Alumni Association have partnered to sponsor Doctor to Doctor, a practice tips section featuring effective practice management methods from

successful DCs. Doctor to Doctor is spearheaded by Dr. Ralph Barrale, vice president of chiropractic affairs and dean of postgraduate education. If you would like to submit a practice tip to Doctor to Doctor, please contact Dr. Barrale at 800-782-3344, or e-mail your tip to tower@logan.edu.

This installment of Doctor to Doctor features practice tips from Dr. Steven Weiniger, managing partner of the BodyZone LLC in Alpharetta, Georgia. Dr. Weiniger is a chiropractor and continuing education instructor for the University of Bridgeport Chiropractic College and New York Chiropractic College.

Dr. Weiniger shares this article with Logan College of Chiropractic/University Programs for publication in Logan Speaks. Logan claims no copyright interest in Dr. Weiniger's work.

Seven Reasons to Take Posture Pictures Along With X-rays



Dr. Steven Weiniger

Posture pictures are an essential tool for the musculo-skeletal professional, perhaps as important as X-rays. DCs once routinely took 14x36 films to observe whole body distortions, but for many reasons most DCs today depend on 14x17 films, which means they can rely less on radiographic findings of the whole body bio-mechanics to guide their adjustments and treatment. Even for adherents of techniques that rely on X-rays, reducing exposure and expense is appreciated. While X-rays are invaluable to screen for osseous pathology, to rule out red flags or observe disc degeneration or other level specific tissue changes, and MRIs are an even better (albeit expensive) diagnostic tool, posture pictures are inexpensive and complement X-rays in some surprisingly significant ways.

1. Observing global bio-mechanics of posture

Structural screenings, especially looking at the four PostureZones (the weight bearing zones of posture including the head, torso, pelvis and lower extremities), is easier from a whole body gridded image than just looking at a specific region on an X-ray. If you agree that posture is important, then carefully examining a photo of the overall body posture gives you the opportunity to correlate symptoms, exam, palpation and other findings with their body mechanics. Tie it altogether in a narrative explaining the problem...which creates value for reason No. 2.

2. Communicating and engaging patients

I've shown many people the curves and spurs of their spine; early in my career that was how DCs explained to a patient what was wrong. To my frustration, many of them didn't care. Patients then and now asked, "Can you help me?"

Think about this: When someone sees a photograph of five people, who do they look at first...and hardest? Themselves. People are wired to look at themselves, and people are intently interested in your words when you "connect the dots" between their problem and a picture of their body, using biomechanics as a framework to explain your objective findings. A report analyzing their posture—software generated or using a felt-tip marker and a ruler on a printout—is a great reminder to help them understand and retell that narrative, which creates value for reasons No. 3 and 4.



3. Demonstrating progress

People are engaged and want to see changes when you retake posture pictures either at the end of a phase of care or

when you compare this year's annual posture picture to prior ones. A digital photo against a grid to track progress makes sense, and can be done far more often than X-rays to assess any changes and build body awareness.

4. Documenting for insurance carriers and other third parties

Pre- and post-treatment posture pictures of a patient can show change and demonstrate real value, even to a skeptical claims examiner.

5. Affordable expense with no radiation exposure

Posture pictures only require a camera and printer. With the evidence-based care, communities support less X-rays and insurance guidelines have diminished the value and reimbursement of X-rays. While adherents of some techniques can disagree with insurance companies, it makes sense to minimize exposure and unnecessary expense, as well as improve patients' understanding of their own bodies.

6. Positioning a practice

Teaching a patient to be aware of his or her own posture reinforces the importance of chiropractic adjustments in maintaining their ability to stand tall and aligned and move full range with symmetry. The first step in strengthening posture awareness is with a photograph, which people often show to friends and family when they talk about their "posture doc."



7. Positioning the chiropractic profession

Chiropractors do not agree about many things, and many people do not agree with anything about chiropractic. However, no responsible voice in healthcare argues with the benefits of standing up straight versus slouching. Especially as baby boomers slump into their senior years, posture will grow in relevance, and is a potential unifying branding message for the chiropractic profession.

Posture is functional and dynamic, so improving posture does not merely mean standing up straighter. Improving, or strengthening, posture means improving the balance and alignment of the body, and maximizing moving with stability (e.g. avoiding injury) in the tradeoff between flexibility and stability between motion and effort. But that's the subject of another article.

Bottom line: Posture pictures create value by engaging and educating patients.

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Thomas F. Keller

Associate Vice President, Public Relations

Logan Speaks Editor

LOGAN SPEAKS

Logan College of Chiropractic

1851 Schoettler Road

PO Box 1065

Chesterfield, MO 63006-1065

tower@logan.edu

www.logan.edu

1-800-782-3344

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